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AP/Ariel Leon

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A member of the U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command's 720th Special Tactics Group takes aim with the M4A1 with M203, 5.56mm, one of the most powerful arms in the Special Forces arsenal. On Page 36, Gen. Doug Brown, head of U.S. Special Operations Command, talks about how far his forces have come since Desert One. Corbis

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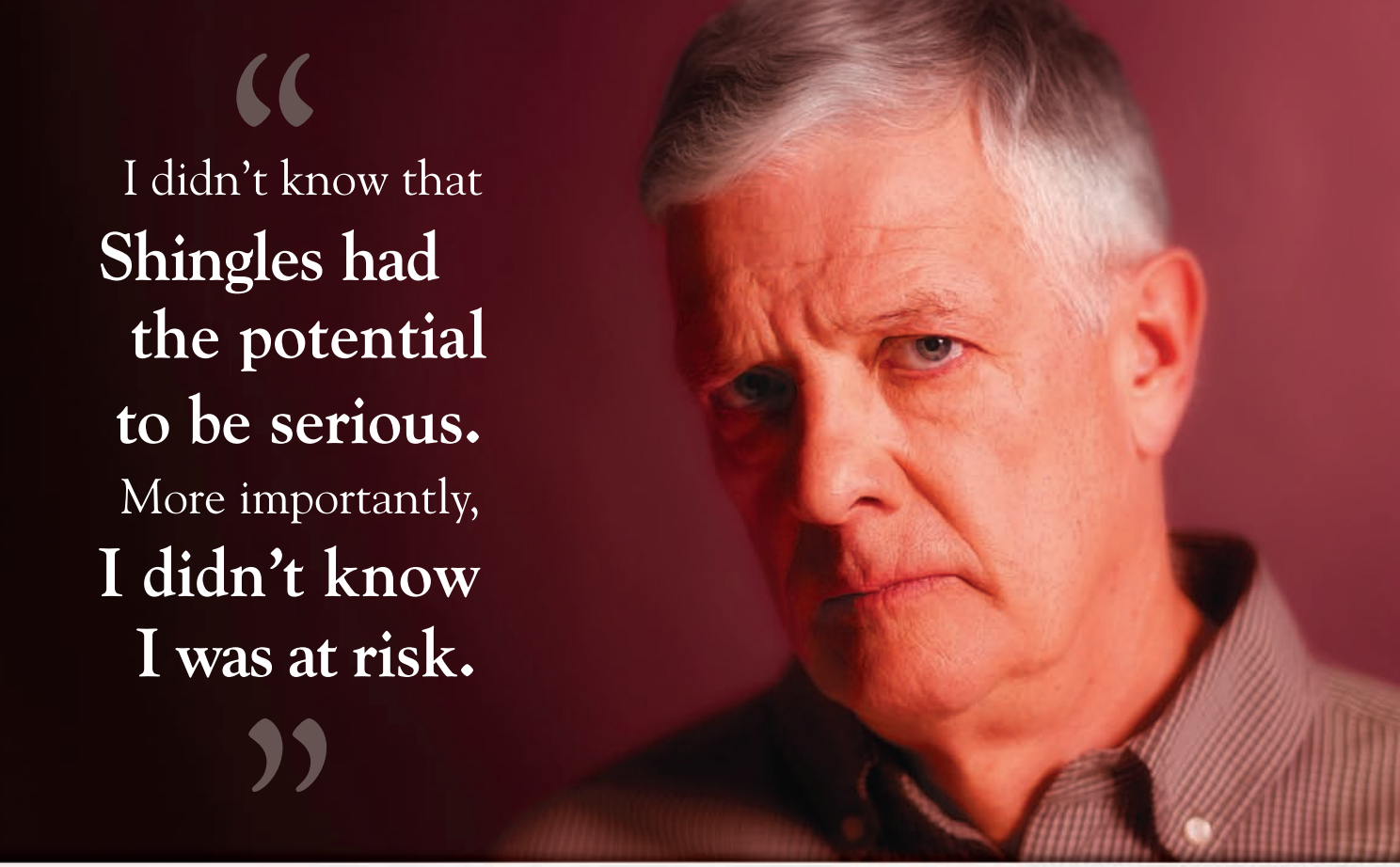


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# VET VOICE

## 'Missing in Iraq'

Thank you for the excellent article on missing U.S. serviceman Matt Maupin. However, it didn't mention that he is a 2001 alumnus of American Legion Buckeye Boys State. Every year since his capture, the Ohio American Legion Boys State program has conducted a special recognition for Matt and will continue to do so until his situation is resolved. He is part of The American Legion family and is constantly on our minds and in our hearts.

***– Gerald A. White, director, American Legion Buckeye Boys State***

As an American Legion member for 40 years and active in the POW/MIA Network for almost the same length of time, I'd like to thank you for the article on Matt Maupin. Not only is it the best article concerning Maupin, Scott Speicher and Ahmed Altaie, it is the best "awareness" article I have read. I hope The American Legion can take the issue a step further and work to help change the terminology back to "POW/MIA," allowing for the protection of those captured. Yes, I have heard all the reasons for the change to "missing/captured," but it's wrong. Mike Durant, the pilot of "Black Hawk Down," will tell you that being considered an American POW is probably the reason he's alive today, and that was a feeding mission.

*– Bob Jones, Meredith, N.H.*

I appreciate the article on Staff Sgt. Matt Maupin. My hope and prayers go out to his family, friends and fellow soldiers. I also appreciate the information on Capt. Scott Speicher and Spec. Ahmed Altaie. While I look forward to the return of these three heroes, I want to point out three others for whom we need to pray. Marc Gonsalves, Tom Howes and Keith Stansell have been held hostage longer than any other U.S. citizens in our history. On Feb. 13, 2003, their plane crash-landed in the jungles of Colombia while they were on a Southern Command Reconnaissance System mission. They are being held by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, FARC, a terrorist group. Their rescue is the No. 1 priority of U.S. Southern Command.

Along with Maupin, Speicher and Altaie, please keep Marc, Tom and Keith in your thoughts and prayers.

*– John Manning, Pembroke Pines, Fla.*

## 'The Veteran Entrepreneur'

I'm a founder and chief executive officer of a service-disabled veteran-owned small business, or SDVOSB. I read your article with a mix of anger and frustration. SDVOSBs have been outreached, workshopped, trained, counseled, mentored, advocated, assisted, etc., for years, yet the federal government has not once come close to meeting the mandated 3-percent target.

People in public-sector organizations equate process with

outcome and, in most cases, prefer process. I've attended numerous events about how to "network" and do business with the government. That is the process. What I need is the outcome: a contract. SDVOSBs don't generate revenue without one. We are paid only for fulfilling a contract, not its acquisition.

Many veterans listen to government employees and others who advocate starting their own businesses believing they will be successful, only to find that reality doesn't meet even their modest expectations. Veterans risk either all or a significant amount of their personal assets to start SDVOSBs and find they spend the majority of their time on process activities and after a year or longer haven't been awarded even one contract. So many times I've sat through presentations on how SDVOSBs are valued and how much the government wants to work with us only to find that no contracts are forthcoming.

Only a contract officer can award a contract, and unless that happens, SDVOSBs will go out of business, leaving veterans with personal debt from which they may never recover. I recommend the government pool the money spent on process activities and use it to fund SDVOSB contracts. Then it would be much closer to meeting the 3-percent target and SDVOSBs would be thriving.

*– James T. Slattery, Plattsburgh, N.Y.*

**'Bellum Interruptum'**

The article by Victor Davis Hanson demonstrates once again that he is our very best military historian and analyst. His grasp of decisions and their consequences, both macro and micro, is unequaled.

*– Charles Keadle, Cary, N.C.*

Victor Davis Hanson's point that the Gulf War was stopped a day or two too soon is right on the mark. However, George H.W. Bush would have been excoriated whichever way he went. The left, including most of the mainstream media, criticizes Republicans no matter how anything goes. If he kept going, he caused a slaughter. If he stopped, he let Saddam off the hook. He couldn't win.

Today, President Bush is in exactly the same situation. Had he not gone after Saddam and something bad happened, he would be blamed. He does what he thinks is right and now he's being roasted for it. The left, again, has nothing constructive to add – only criticism. What our enemies must think of us now.

*– Tom Portante, Pittsburgh*

Like almost everyone else who looks at the Iraq front, Victor Davis Hanson needs to broaden his analysis to include other moral actors besides U.S. decision-makers. The man most responsible for Iraq's current distress is Saddam Hussein. Since 1975 – when he signed, then immediately broke, the Algiers Agreement – virtually every action of his was catastrophic for the people of Iraq and the world.

The next most responsible are the nations that flattered, appeased, protected, supplied and made blood-for-oil money off Saddam from the start of his regime. I supported the 1991 cease-fire, and even with hindsight, I still think it was the best decision. The "new world order" deserved a chance to work, even if it cost the blood of Iraqis in the short run. After the fall of the Soviet empire, it appeared the United Nations would cease to work for tyrants and terrorists and work as originally conceived to protect and expand freedom. The United Nations was supposed to contain Saddam, enforce the cease-fire and arms and trade embargoes, and protect and provide for the Iraqi people. Instead, it propped him up, protected him and allowed him to dream that he would one day have another chance at conquest and devastation. It was simply not politically or militarily possible for the United States to defy domestic, Arab and international opinion to overthrow Saddam in 1991.

The 2003 escalation that overthrew him had a lot more domestic and international support because of the demonstrable failure of 1991.

*– Raymond Paul Opeka, Grand Rapids, Mich.*

**'A Test Like None Other'**

Your article about Michael Kuryla and the sinking of the USS *Indianapolis* was of particular interest to me. I was in a Navy field hospital on Guam, badly burned, when survivors of the incident came in. I heard some of their accounts firsthand and had an unforgettable personal experience.

The *Indianapolis* was torpedoed just after midnight July 30, 1945. I was burned in a plane accident later that same morning. My Navy patrol bomber squadron, VPB-123, was operating off Yontan airstrip at Okinawa. A fighter pilot taking off knocked the auxiliary fuel tank off the bottom of his plane above a bomber under which I was standing, and the fuel exploded. I spent the next 13 months in plastic surgery.

One of the *Indianapolis* survivors, a fellow from Texas, was on a cot next to me. One night he began thrashing

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Some common side effects associated with COREG CR and COREG include shortness of breath, a slow heartbeat, weight gain, fatigue, hypotension, dizziness, faintness, or runny nose/sore throat. People taking COREG CR or COREG who have any of these symptoms should call their doctor. Additionally, if patients experience fatigue or dizziness, they should sit or lie down and avoid driving or hazardous tasks. Beta-blockers may mask the symptoms of an overactive thyroid or low blood sugar, or may alter blood sugar levels. People with diabetes should report any changes in blood sugar levels to their physician. Contact lens wearers may produce fewer tears or have dry eyes. As with any medicine, patients taking COREG CR or COREG should first tell their doctor what other medications they are taking. COREG CR and COREG should be taken with food.

There are some people who should not take COREG CR or COREG, including those with severe heart failure who are hospitalized in the intensive care unit. Also, people who require certain intravenous medications that help support their circulation (inotropic medications) should not receive COREG CR or COREG. Other people who should not take COREG CR or COREG are those who are prone to asthma or other breathing problems, those with a very slow heartbeat or heart that skips a beat (irregular heartbeat) and those with liver problems.

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# BRIEF SUMMARY

The following is a brief summary only; see full prescribing information for complete product information.

## CONTRAINDICATIONS

COREG CR is contraindicated in patients with bronchial asthma (2 cases of death from status asthmaticus have been reported in patients receiving single doses of immediate-release carvedilol) or related bronchospastic conditions, second- or third-degree AV block, sick sinus syndrome or severe bradycardia (unless a permanent pacemaker is in place), or in patients with cardiogenic shock or who have decompensated heart failure requiring the use of intravenous inotropic therapy. Such patients should first be weaned from intravenous therapy before initiating COREG CR.

Use of COREG CR in patients with clinically manifest hepatic impairment is not recommended.

COREG CR is contraindicated in patients with hypersensitivity to any component of the product.

## WARNINGS

**Cessation of Therapy with COREG CR: Patients with coronary artery disease, who are being treated with COREG CR, should be advised against abrupt discontinuation of therapy. Severe exacerbation of angina and the occurrence of myocardial infarction and ventricular arrhythmias have been reported in angina patients following the abrupt discontinuation of therapy with β-blockers. The last 2 complications may occur with or without preceding exacerbation of the angina pectoris. As with other β-blockers, when discontinuation of COREG CR is planned, the patients should be carefully observed and advised to limit physical activity to a minimum. COREG CR should be discontinued over 1 to 2 weeks whenever possible. If the angina worsens or acute coronary insufficiency develops, it is recommended that COREG CR be promptly reinstituted, at least temporarily. Because coronary artery disease is common and may be unrecognized, it may be prudent not to discontinue COREG CR therapy abruptly even in patients treated only for hypertension or heart failure (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION in the full prescribing information).**

**Peripheral Vascular Disease:** β-blockers can precipitate or aggravate symptoms of arterial insufficiency in patients with peripheral vascular disease. Caution should be exercised in such individuals.

**Anesthesia and Major Surgery:** If treatment with COREG CR is to be continued perioperatively, particular care should be taken when anesthetic agents which depress myocardial function, such as ether, cyclopropane, and trichloroethylene, are used. See OVERDOSAGE (in the full prescribing information) for information on treatment of bradycardia and hypertension.

**Diabetes and Hypoglycemia:** In general, β-blockers may mask some of the manifestations of hypoglycemia, particularly tachycardia. Nonselective β-blockers may potentiate insulin-induced hypoglycemia and delay recovery of serum glucose levels. Patients subject to spontaneous hypoglycemia, or diabetic patients receiving insulin or oral hypoglycemic agents, should be cautioned about these possibilities. In heart failure patients, there is a risk of worsening hyperglycemia (see PRECAUTIONS, Effects on Glycemic Control in Type 2 Diabetic Patients).

**Thyrotoxicosis:** β-adrenergic blockade may mask clinical signs of hyperthyroidism, such as tachycardia. Abrupt withdrawal of β-blockade may be followed by an exacerbation of the symptoms of hyperthyroidism or may precipitate thyroid storm.

## PRECAUTIONS

**General:** In clinical trials of COREG CR in patients with hypertension (338 subjects) and in patients with left ventricular dysfunction following a myocardial infarction or heart failure (187 subjects), the profile of adverse events observed with carvedilol phosphate was generally similar to that observed with the administration of immediate-release carvedilol. Therefore, the information included within this section is based on data from controlled clinical trials with COREG CR as well as immediate-release carvedilol.

In clinical trials with immediate-release carvedilol, bradycardia was reported in about 2% of hypertensive patients, 9% of heart failure patients, and 6.5% of myocardial infarction patients with left ventricular dysfunction. Bradycardia was reported in 0.5% of patients receiving COREG CR in a study of heart failure patients and myocardial infarction patients with left ventricular dysfunction. There were no reports of bradycardia in the clinical trial of COREG CR in hypertension. However, if pulse rate drops below 55 beats/minute, the dosage of COREG CR should be reduced.

In clinical trials of primarily mild-to-moderate heart failure with immediate-release carvedilol, hypotension and postural hypotension occurred in 9.7% and syncope in 3.4% of patients receiving carvedilol compared to 3.6% and 2.5% of placebo patients, respectively. The risk for these events was highest during the first 30 days of dosing, corresponding to the up-titration period and was a cause for discontinuation of therapy in 0.7% of carvedilol patients, compared to 0.4% of placebo patients. In a long-term, placebo-controlled trial in severe heart failure (COPERNICUS), hypotension and postural hypotension occurred in 15.1% and syncope in 2.9% of heart failure patients receiving carvedilol compared to 8.7% and 2.3% of placebo patients, respectively. These events were a cause for discontinuation of therapy in 1.1% of carvedilol patients, compared to 0.8% of placebo patients.

In the clinical trial of COREG CR in hypertensive patients, syncope was reported in 0.3% of patients receiving COREG CR compared to 0% of patients receiving placebo. There were no reports of postural hypotension in this trial. Postural hypotension occurred in 1.8% and syncope in 0.1% of hypertensive patients receiving immediate-release carvedilol, primarily following the initial dose or at the time of dose increase and was a cause for discontinuation of therapy in 1% of patients.

In the CAPRICORN study of survivors of an acute myocardial infarction with left ventricular dysfunction, hypotension or postural hypotension occurred in 20.2% of patients receiving carvedilol compared to 12.6% of placebo patients. Syncope was reported in 3.9% and 1.9% of patients, respectively. These events were a cause for discontinuation of therapy in 2.5% of patients receiving carvedilol, compared to 0.2% of placebo patients.

To decrease the likelihood of syncope or excessive hypotension, treatment with COREG CR should be initiated with 10 mg once daily for heart failure patients, and at 20 mg once daily for hypertensive patients and survivors of an acute myocardial infarction with left ventricular dysfunction. Dosage should then be increased slowly, according to recommendations in the DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION section, (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION in the full prescribing information), and the drug should be taken with food. During initiation of therapy, the patient should be cautioned to avoid situations such as driving or hazardous tasks, where injury could result should syncope occur.

Rarely, use of carvedilol in patients with heart failure has resulted in deterioration of renal function. Patients at risk appear to be those with low blood pressure (systolic blood pressure <100 mm Hg), ischemic heart disease and diffuse vascular disease, and/or underlying renal insufficiency. Renal function has returned to baseline when carvedilol was stopped. In patients with these risk factors it is recommended that renal function be monitored during up-titration of COREG CR and the drug discontinued or dosage reduced if worsening of renal function occurs.

Worsening heart failure or fluid retention may occur during up-titration of carvedilol. If such symptoms occur, diuretics should be increased and the dose of COREG CR should not be advanced until clinical stability resumes (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION in the full prescribing information). Occasionally it is necessary to lower the dose of COREG CR or temporarily discontinue it. Such episodes do not preclude subsequent successful titration of, or a favorable response to, COREG CR. In a placebo-controlled trial of patients with severe heart failure, worsening heart failure during the first 3 months was reported to a similar degree with immediate-release carvedilol and with placebo. When treatment was maintained beyond 3 months, worsening heart failure was reported less frequently in patients treated with carvedilol than with placebo. Worsening heart failure observed during long-term therapy is more likely to be related to the patients' underlying disease than to treatment with carvedilol.

In patients with pheochromocytoma, an α-blocking agent should be initiated prior to the use of any β-blocking agent. Although carvedilol has both α- and β-blocking pharmacologic activities, there has been no experience with its use in this condition. Therefore, caution should be taken in the administration of carvedilol to patients suspected of having pheochromocytoma.

Agents with non-selective β-blocking activity may provoke chest pain in patients with Prinzmetal's variant angina. There has been no clinical experience with carvedilol in these patients although the α-blocking activity may prevent such symptoms. However, caution should be taken in the administration of COREG CR to patients suspected of having Prinzmetal's variant angina.

**Effects on Glycemic Control in Type 2 Diabetic Patients:** In heart failure patients with diabetes, carvedilol therapy may lead to worsening hyperglycemia, which responds to intensification of hypoglycemic therapy. It is recommended that blood glucose be monitored when dosing with COREG CR is initiated, adjusted, or discontinued. Studies designed to examine the effects of carvedilol on glycemic control in patients with diabetes and heart failure have not been conducted.

In a study designed to examine the effects of immediate-release carvedilol on glycemic control in a population with mild-to-moderate hypertension and well-controlled type 2 diabetes mellitus, carvedilol had no adverse effect on glycemic control, based on HbA1c measurements (see CLINICAL TRIALS, Hypertensive Patients with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus [GEMINI] in the full prescribing information).

**Risk of Anaphylactic Reaction:** While taking β-blockers, patients with a history of severe anaphylactic reaction to a variety of allergens may be more reactive to repeated challenge, either accidental, diagnostic, or therapeutic. Such patients may be unresponsive to the usual doses of epinephrine used to treat allergic reaction.

**Nonallergic Bronchospasm (e.g., chronic bronchitis and emphysema):** Patients with bronchospastic disease should, in general, not receive β-blockers. COREG CR may be used with caution, however, in patients who do not respond to, or cannot tolerate, other antihypertensive agents. It is prudent, if COREG CR is used, to use the smallest effective dose, so that inhibition of endogenous or exogenous β-agonists is minimized.

In clinical trials of patients with heart failure, patients with bronchospastic disease were enrolled if they did not require oral or inhaled medication to treat their bronchospastic disease. In such patients, it is recommended that COREG CR be used with caution. The dosing recommendations should be followed closely and the dose should be lowered if any evidence of bronchospasm is observed during up-titration.

**Information for Patients:** Patients taking COREG CR should be advised of the following:

- They should not interrupt or discontinue using COREG CR without a physician's advice.
- Heart failure patients should consult their physician if they experience signs or symptoms of worsening heart failure such as weight gain or increasing shortness of breath.
- They may experience a drop in blood pressure when standing, resulting in dizziness and, rarely, fainting. Patients should sit or lie down when these symptoms of lowered blood pressure occur.
- If patients experience dizziness or fatigue, they should avoid driving or hazardous tasks.
- They should consult a physician if they experience dizziness or faintness, in case the dosage should be adjusted.
- They should not crush or chew COREG CR capsules.
- They should take COREG CR with food.
- They should separate the administration of COREG CR from alcohol consumption (including prescription and over-the-counter medications that contain ethanol) by at least 2 hours.
- Diabetic patients should report any changes in blood sugar levels to their physician.
- Contact lens wearers may experience decreased lacrimation.

**Drug Interactions:** (Also see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY, Pharmacokinetic Drug-Drug Interactions in the full prescribing information.)

***Alcohol:*** Concomitant administration of COREG CR with alcohol may affect the modified release properties of COREG CR, potentially resulting in a faster rate of release and higher than expected peak and lower than expected trough plasma concentrations of carvedilol phosphate. To avoid the potential for this interaction, the administration of COREG CR with alcohol (including prescription and over-the-counter medications that contain ethanol) should be separated by at least 2 hours. COREG CR should be taken in the morning with food. (See DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION in the full prescribing information.)

***Inhibitors of CYP2D6:*** poor metabolizers of debrisoquin: Interactions of carvedilol with strong inhibitors of CYP2D6 (such as quinidine, fluoxetine, paroxetine, and propafenone) have not been studied, but these drugs would be expected to increase blood levels of the R(+) enantiomer of carvedilol (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY in the full prescribing information). Retrospective analysis of side effects in clinical trials showed that poor 2D6 metabolizers had a higher rate of dizziness during up-titration, presumably resulting from vasodilating effects of the higher concentrations of the α-blocking R(+) enantiomer.

***Catecholamine-depleting agents:*** Patients taking both agents with β-blocking properties and a drug that can deplete catecholamines (e.g., reserpine and monoamine oxidase inhibitors) should be observed closely for signs of hypotension and/or severe bradycardia.

***Clonidine:*** Concomitant administration of clonidine with agents with β-blocking properties may potentiate blood-pressure- and heart-rate-lowering effects. When concomitant treatment with agents with β-blocking properties and clonidine is to be terminated, the β-blocking agent should be discontinued first. Clonidine therapy can then be discontinued several days later by gradually decreasing the dosage.

***Cyclosporine:*** Modest increases in mean trough cyclosporine concentrations were observed following initiation of carvedilol treatment in 21 renal transplant patients suffering from chronic vascular rejection. In about 30% of patients, the dose of cyclosporine had to be reduced in order to maintain cyclosporine concentrations within the therapeutic range, while in the remainder no adjustment was needed. On the average for the group, the dose of cyclosporine was reduced about 20% in these patients. Due to wide interindividual variability in the dose adjustment required, it is recommended that cyclosporine concentrations be monitored closely after initiation of carvedilol therapy and that the dose of cyclosporine be adjusted as appropriate.

***Digoxin:*** Digoxin concentrations are increased by about 15% when digoxin and carvedilol are administered concomitantly. Both digoxin and carvedilol slow AV conduction. Therefore, increased monitoring of digoxin is recommended when initiating, adjusting, or discontinuing COREG CR.

***Inducers and inhibitors of hepatic metabolism:*** Rifampin reduced plasma concentrations of carvedilol by about 70%. Cimetidine increased AUC by about 30% but caused no change in $C_{max}$.

***Calcium channel blockers:*** Isolated cases of conduction disturbance (rarely with hemodynamic compromise) have been observed when carvedilol is co-administered with diltiazem. As with other agents with β-blocking properties, if COREG CR is to be administered orally with calcium channel blockers of the verapamil or diltiazem type, it is recommended that ECG and blood pressure be monitored.

***Insulin or oral hypoglycemics:*** Agents with β-blocking properties may enhance the blood-sugar-reducing effect of insulin and oral hypoglycemics. Therefore, in patients taking insulin or oral hypoglycemics, regular monitoring of blood glucose is recommended.

***Proton Pump Inhibitors:*** There is no clinically meaningful increase in AUC and $C_{max}$ with concomitant administration of carvedilol extended-release capsules with pantoprazole.

**Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility:** In 2-year studies conducted in rats given carvedilol at doses up to 75 mg/kg/day (12 times the maximum recommended human dose [MRHD] when compared on a mg/m² basis) or in mice given up to 200 mg/kg/day (16 times the MRHD on a mg/m² basis), carvedilol had no carcinogenic effect.

Carvedilol was negative when tested in a battery of genotoxicity assays, including the Ames and the CHO/HGPRT assays for mutagenicity and the in vitro hamster micronucleus and in vivo human lymphocyte cell tests for clastogenicity.

At doses ≥200 mg/kg/day (≥32 times the MRHD as mg/m² carvedilol was toxic to adult rats (sedation, reduced weight gain) and was associated with a reduced number of successful matings, prolonged mating time, significantly fewer corpora lutea and implants per dam, and complete resorption of 18% of the litters. The no-observed-effect dose level for overt toxicity and impairment of fertility was 60 mg/kg/day (10 times the MRHD as mg/m²).

**Pregnancy:** ***Teratogenic Effects:*** Pregnancy Category C. Studies performed in pregnant rats and rabbits given carvedilol revealed increased post-implantation loss in rats at doses of 300 mg/kg/day (50 times the MRHD as mg/m²) and in rabbits at doses of 75 mg/kg/day (25 times the MRHD as mg/m²). In the rats, there was also a decrease in fetal body weight at the maternally toxic dose of 300 mg/kg/day (50 times the MRHD as mg/m²), which was accompanied by an elevation in the frequency of fetuses with delayed skeletal development (missing or stunted 13th rib). In rats the no-observed-effect level for developmental toxicity was 60 mg/kg/day (10 times the MRHD as mg/m²); in rabbits it was 15 mg/kg/day (5 times the MRHD as mg/m²). There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. COREG CR should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

**Nursing Mothers:** It is not known whether this drug is excreted in human milk. Studies in rats have shown that carvedilol and/or its metabolites (as well as other β-blockers) cross the placental barrier and are excreted in breast milk. There was increased mortality at one week post partum in neonates from rats treated with 60 mg/kg/day (10 times the MRHD as mg/m²) and above during the last trimester through day 22 of lactation. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk and because of the potential for serious adverse reactions in nursing infants from β-blockers, especially bradycardia, a decision should be made whether to discontinue nursing or to discontinue the drug, taking into account the importance of the drug to the mother. The effects of other α- and β-blocking agents have included perinatal and neonatal distress.

**Pediatric Use:** Safety and efficacy of carvedilol in patients younger than 18 years of age have not been established.

**Geriatric Use:** The clinical studies of carvedilol in patients with hypertension, heart failure, and left ventricular dysfunction following myocardial infarction did not include sufficient numbers of subjects 65 years of age or older to determine whether they respond differently from younger patients.

The following information is available for trials with immediate-release carvedilol. Of the 765 patients with heart failure randomized to carvedilol in US clinical trials, 31% (235) were 65 years of age or older, and 7.3% (56) were 75 years of age or older. Of the 1,156 patients randomized to carvedilol in a long-term, placebo-controlled trial in severe heart failure, 47% (547) were 65 years of age or older, and 15% (174) were 75 years of age or older. Of 3,025 patients receiving carvedilol in heart failure trials worldwide, 42% were 65 years of age or older. Of the 975 myocardial infarction patients randomized to carvedilol in the CAPRICORN trial, 48% (468) were 65 years of age or older, and 11% (111) were 75 years of age or older. Of the 2,065 hypertensive patients in US clinical trials of efficacy or safety who were treated with carvedilol, 21% (436) were 65 years of age or older. Of 3,722 patients receiving immediate-release carvedilol in hypertension clinical trials conducted worldwide, 24% were 65 years of age or older.

With the exception of dizziness in hypertensive patients (incidence 8.8% in the elderly vs. 6% in younger patients), no overall differences in the safety or effectiveness (see Figures 2 and 4 in the full prescribing information) were observed between the older subjects and younger subjects in each of these populations. Similarly, other reported clinical experience has not identified differences in responses between the elderly and younger subjects, but greater sensitivity of some older individuals cannot be ruled out.

## ADVERSE REACTIONS

Carvedilol has been evaluated for safety in patients with heart failure (mild, moderate, and severe heart failure), in patients with left ventricular dysfunction following myocardial infarction, and in hypertensive patients. The observed adverse event profile was consistent with the pharmacology of the drug and the health status of the patients in the clinical trials. Adverse events reported for each of these patient populations reflecting the use of either COREG CR or immediate-release carvedilol are provided below. Excluded are adverse events considered too general to be informative, and those not reasonably associated with the use of the drug because they were associated with the condition being treated or are very common in the treated population. Rates of adverse events were generally similar across demographic subsets (men and women, elderly and non-elderly, blacks and non-blacks). COREG CR has been evaluated for safety in a 4-week (2 weeks of immediate-release carvedilol and 2 weeks of COREG CR) clinical study (n = 187) which included 157 patients with stable mild, moderate, or severe chronic heart failure and 30 patients with left ventricular dysfunction following acute myocardial infarction. The profile of adverse events observed with COREG CR in this small, short-term study was generally similar to that observed with immediate-release carvedilol. Differences in safety would not be expected based on the similarity in plasma levels for COREG CR and immediate-release carvedilol.

**Heart Failure:** The following information describes the safety experience in heart failure with immediate-release carvedilol.

Carvedilol has been evaluated for safety in heart failure in more than 4,500 patients worldwide of whom more than 2,100 participated in placebo-controlled clinical trials. Approximately 60% of the total treated population in placebo-controlled clinical trials received carvedilol for at least 6 months and 30% received carvedilol for at least 12 months. In the COMET trial, 1,511 patients with mild-to-moderate heart failure were treated with carvedilol for up to 5.9 years (mean 4.8 years). Both in US clinical trials in mild-to-moderate heart failure that compared carvedilol in daily doses up to 100 mg (n = 765) to placebo (n = 437), and in a multinational clinical trial in severe heart failure (COPERNICUS) that compared carvedilol in daily doses up to 50 mg (n = 1,156) with placebo (n = 1,133), discontinuation rates for adverse experiences were similar in carvedilol and placebo patients. In placebo-controlled clinical trials, the only cause of discontinuation >1%, and occurring more often on carvedilol was dizziness (1.3% on carvedilol, 0.6% on placebo in the COPERNICUS trial).

Table 1 shows adverse events reported in patients with mild-to-moderate heart failure enrolled in US placebo-controlled clinical trials, and with severe heart failure enrolled in the COPERNICUS trial. Shown are adverse events that occurred more frequently in drug-treated patients than placebo-treated patients with an incidence of >3% in patients treated with carvedilol regardless of causality. Median study medication exposure was 6.3 months for both carvedilol and placebo patients in the trials of mild-to-moderate heart failure, and 10.4 months in the trial of severe heart failure patients. The adverse event profile of carvedilol observed in the long-term COMET study was generally similar to that observed in the US Heart Failure Trials.

**Table 1. Adverse Events (% Occurrence) Occurring More Frequently With Immediate-Release Carvedilol Than With Placebo in Patients With Mild-to-Moderate Heart Failure Enrolled in US Heart Failure Trials or in Patients With Severe Heart Failure in the COPERNICUS Trial (Incidence >3% in Patients Treated With Carvedilol, Regardless of Causality)**

| | Mild-to-Moderate Heart Failure | | Severe Heart Failure | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Carvedilol (n = 765) | Placebo (n = 437) | Carvedilol (n = 1,156) | Placebo (n = 1,133) |
| Body as a Whole | | | | |
| Asthenia | 7 | 7 | 11 | 9 |
| Fatigue | 24 | 22 | - | - |
| Digoxin level increased | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Edema generalized | 5 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| Edema dependent | 4 | 2 | - | - |
| Cardiovascular | | | | |
| Bradycardia | 9 | 1 | 10 | 3 |
| Hypotension | 9 | 3 | 14 | 8 |
| Syncope | 3 | 3 | 8 | 5 |
| Angina pectoris | 2 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| Central Nervous System | | | | |
| Dizziness | 32 | 19 | 24 | 17 |
| Headache | 8 | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| Gastrointestinal | | | | |
| Diarrhea | 12 | 6 | 5 | 3 |
| Nausea | 9 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Vomiting | 6 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Metabolic | | | | |
| Hyperglycemia | 12 | 8 | 5 | 3 |
| Weight increase | 10 | 7 | 12 | 11 |
| BUN increased | 6 | 5 | - | - |
| NPN increased | 6 | 5 | - | - |
| Hypercholesterolemia | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Edema peripheral | 2 | 1 | 7 | 6 |
| Musculoskeletal | | | | |
| Arthralgia | 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Respiratory | | | | |
| Cough increased | 8 | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| Rales | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| Vision | | | | |
| Vision abnormal | 5 | 2 | - | - |

Cardiac failure and dyspnea were also reported in these studies, but the rates were equal or greater in patients who received placebo.

The following adverse events were reported with a frequency of >1% but ≤3% and more frequently with carvedilol in either the US placebo-controlled trials in patients with mild-to-moderate heart failure, or in patients with severe heart failure in the COPERNICUS trial.

**Incidence >1% to ≤3%**

**Body as a Whole:** Allergy, malaise, hypovolemia, fever, leg edema.
**Cardiovascular:** Fluid overload, postural hypotension, aggravated angina pectoris, AV block, palpitation, hypertension.
**Central and Peripheral Nervous System:** Hypesthesia, vertigo, paresthesia.
**Gastrointestinal:** Melena, periodontitis.
**Liver and Biliary System:** SGPT increased, SGOT increased.
**Metabolic and Nutritional:** Hyperuricemia, hypoglycemia, hyponatremia, increased alkaline phosphatase, glycosuria, hypervolemia, diabetes mellitus, GGT increased, weight loss, hyperkalemia, creatinine increased.
**Musculoskeletal:** Muscle cramps.
**Platelet, Bleeding and Clotting:** Prothrombin decreased, purpura, thrombocytopenia.
**Psychiatric:** Somnolence.
**Reproductive, male:** Impotence.
**Special Senses:** Blurred vision.
**Urinary System:** Renal insufficiency, albuminuria, hematuria.

**Left Ventricular Dysfunction Following Myocardial Infarction:** The following information describes the safety experience in left ventricular dysfunction following acute myocardial infarction with immediate-release carvedilol.

Carvedilol has been evaluated for safety in survivors of an acute myocardial infarction with left ventricular dysfunction in the CAPRICORN trial which involved 969 patients who received carvedilol and 980 who received placebo. Approximately 75% of the patients received carvedilol for at least 6 months and 53% received carvedilol for at least 12 months. Patients were treated for an average of 12.9 months and 12.8 months with carvedilol and placebo, respectively.

The most common adverse events reported with carvedilol in the CAPRICORN trial were consistent with the profile of the drug in the US heart failure trials and the COPERNICUS trial. The only additional adverse events reported in CAPRICORN in >3% of the patients and more commonly on carvedilol were dyspnea, anemia, and lung edema. The following adverse events were reported with a frequency of >1% but ≤3% and more frequently with carvedilol: Flu syndrome, cerebrovascular accident, peripheral vascular disorder, hypotonia, depression, gastrointestinal pain, arthritis, and gout. The overall rates of discontinuations due to adverse events were similar in both groups of patients. In this database, the only cause of discontinuation >1%, and occurring more often on carvedilol was hypotension (1.5% on carvedilol, 0.2% on placebo).

**Hypertension:** COREG CR was evaluated for safety in an 8-week double-blind trial in 337 subjects with essential hypertension. The profile of adverse events observed with COREG CR was generally similar to that observed with immediate-release carvedilol. The overall rates of discontinuations due to adverse events were similar between COREG CR and placebo.

The following adverse events occurred more frequently in patients with essential hypertension who were treated with COREG CR, n = 253, (incidence ≥1% in patients treated with carvedilol, regardless of causality) during this 8-week trial than in placebo-treated patients (n = 84), respectively: Nasopharyngitis (4% vs. 0%), dizziness (2% vs. 1%), nausea (2% vs. 0%), edema peripheral (2% vs. 1%), nasal congestion (1% vs. 0%); paresthesia (1% vs. 0%), sinus congestion (1% vs. 0%), diarrhea (1% vs. 0%), and insomnia (1% vs. 0%).

The following information describes the safety experience in hypertension with immediate-release carvedilol.

Carvedilol has been evaluated for safety in hypertension in more than 2,193 patients in US clinical trials and in 2,976 patients in international clinical trials. Approximately 36% of the total treated population received carvedilol for at least 6 months. In general, carvedilol was well tolerated at doses up to 50 mg daily. Most adverse events reported during carvedilol therapy were of mild to moderate severity. In US controlled clinical trials directly comparing carvedilol monotherapy in doses up to 50 mg (n = 1,142) to placebo (n = 462), 4.9% of carvedilol patients discontinued for adverse events vs. 5.2% of placebo patients. Although there was no overall difference in discontinuation rates, discontinuations were more common in the carvedilol group for postural hypotension (1% vs. 0). The overall incidence of adverse events in US placebo-controlled trials was found to increase with increasing dose of carvedilol. For individual adverse events this could only be distinguished for dizziness, which increased in frequency from 2% to 5% as total daily dose increased from 6.25 mg to 50 mg as single or divided doses.

The following adverse events occurred in US placebo-controlled clinical trials for hypertension with an incidence of ≥1% regardless of causality, and were more frequent in drug-treated patients than placebo-treated patients, respectively: Bradycardia (2% vs. -), postural hypotension (2% vs. -), peripheral edema (1% vs. -), dizziness (6% vs. 5%), insomnia (2% vs. 1%), diarrhea (2% vs. 1%), thrombocytopenia (1% vs. -), hypertriglyceridemia (1% vs. -). These are events with rates >1% to the nearest integer.

Dyspnea and fatigue were also reported in these studies, but the rates were equal or greater in patients who received placebo.

The following adverse events not described above were reported as possibly or probably related to carvedilol in worldwide open or controlled trials with carvedilol in patients with hypertension or heart failure.

**Incidence >0.1% to ≤1%**

**Cardiovascular:** Peripheral ischemia, tachycardia.
**Central and Peripheral Nervous System:** Hypokinesia.
**Gastrointestinal:** Bilirubinemia, increased hepatic enzymes (0.2% of hypertension patients and 0.4% of heart failure patients were discontinued from therapy because of increases in hepatic enzymes; see Laboratory Abnormalities in the full prescribing information.)
**Psychiatric:** Nervousness, sleep disorder, aggravated depression, impaired concentration, abnormal thinking, paroniria, emotional lability.
**Respiratory System:** Asthma (see CONTRAINDICATIONS).
**Reproductive:** Male: Decreased libido.
**Skin and Appendages:** Pruritus, rash erythematous, rash maculopapular, rash psoriaform, photosensitivity reaction.
**Special Senses:** Tinnitus.
**Urinary System:** Micturition frequency increased.
**Autonomic Nervous System:** Dry mouth, sweating increased.
**Metabolic and Nutritional:** Hypokalemia, hypertriglyceridemia.
**Hematologic:** Anemia, leukopenia.

The following events were reported in ≤0.1% of patients and are potentially important: Complete AV block, bundle branch block, myocardial ischemia, cerebrovascular disorder, convulsions, myasthenia, neuralgia, paresis, anaphylactoid reaction, alopecia, exfoliative dermatitis, amnesia, GI hemorrhage, bronchospasm, pulmonary edema, decreased hearing, respiratory alkalosis, increased BUN, decreased HDL, pancytopenia, and atypical lymphocytes.

**Laboratory Abnormalities:** Reversible elevations in serum transaminases (ALT or AST) have been observed during treatment with carvedilol. Rates of transaminase elevations (2- to 3-times the upper limit of normal) observed during controlled clinical trials have generally been similar between patients treated with carvedilol and those treated with placebo. However, transaminase elevations, confirmed by rechallenge, have been observed with carvedilol. In a long-term, placebo-controlled trial in severe heart failure, patients treated with carvedilol had lower values for hepatic transaminases than patients treated with placebo, possibly because carvedilol-induced improvements in cardiac function led to less hepatic congestion and/or improved hepatic blood flow.

Carvedilol therapy has not been associated with clinically significant changes in serum potassium, total triglycerides, total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, uric acid, blood urea nitrogen, or creatinine. No clinically relevant changes were noted in fasting serum glucose in hypertensive patients; fasting serum glucose was not evaluated in the heart failure clinical trials.

***Postmarketing Experience:*** Reports of aplastic anemia and severe skin reactions (Stevens-Johnson syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis, and erythema multiforme) have been rare and received only when carvedilol was administered concomitantly with other medications associated with such reactions. Urinary incontinence in women (which resolved upon discontinuation of the medication) and interstitial pneumonitis have been reported rarely.

## OVERDOSAGE

The acute oral LD50 doses in male and female mice and male and female rats are over 8,000 mg/kg. Overdosage may cause severe hypotension, bradycardia, cardiac insufficiency, cardiogenic shock, and cardiac arrest. Respiratory problems, bronchospasms, vomiting, lapses of consciousness, and generalized seizures may also occur.

The patient should be placed in a supine position and, where necessary, kept under observation and treated under intensive-care conditions. Gastric lavage or pharmacologically induced emesis may be used shortly after ingestion. The following agents may be administered:

*For excessive bradycardia:* atropine, 2 mg IV.

*To support cardiovascular function:* glucagon, 5 to 10 mg IV rapidly over 30 seconds, followed by a continuous infusion of 5 mg/hour; sympathomimetics (dobutamine, isoprenaline, adrenaline) at doses according to body weight and effect.

If peripheral vasodilation dominates, it may be necessary to administer adrenaline or noradrenaline with continuous monitoring of circulatory conditions. For therapy-resistant bradycardia, pacemaker therapy should be performed. For bronchospasm, β-sympathomimetics (as aerosol or IV) or aminophylline IV should be given. In the event of seizures, slow IV injection of diazepam or clonazepam is recommended.

NOTE: In the event of severe intoxication where there are symptoms of shock, treatment with antidotes must be continued for a sufficiently long period of time consistent with the 7- to 10-hour half-life of carvedilol.

There is no experience of overdosage with COREG CR. Cases of overdosage with carvedilol alone or in combination with other drugs have been reported. Quantities ingested in some cases exceeded 1,000 milligrams. Symptoms experienced included low blood pressure and heart rate. Standard supportive treatment was provided and individuals recovered.

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BRS-CR:L2

around, jumped out of bed, and put his hands on the edge of my cot as if he was going to jump on top of me. I was unable to move and knew that if he did jump on me it would do me in. All I could do is scream, which woke him up. He had been dreaming that a rattlesnake was in his bed.

The Navy, to its shame, used the *Indianapolis*' captain, Charles B. McVay III, as a scapegoat for the disaster. In the end, he committed suicide. It was and still is a disgrace to the Navy.

*– George A. Carver, Cambridge, Idaho*

Just to set the record straight, the atomic bomb was developed at Los Alamos, N.M., but was detonated at White Sands Missile Range.

*– Bob Ruiz, Carlisle, Pa.*

**Editor's note:** *Due to an editing error, a timeline in "A Test Like None Other" mistakenly placed the first atomic-bomb detonation at Los Alamos, N.M.*

### The big picture

Sen. Joe Lieberman says Iraq is the central front in the war against Islamist extremism (Big Issues, April). What proof does he have that there are Islamic extremists in Iraq who could and would attack the United States? Is not al-Qaeda regrouping in the wilds of Pakistan? Is not the Taliban once again in control of much of Afghanistan? Senator, you are being taken in by the ideological dreams of President Bush.

*– Frederick Harriman, Endicott, N.Y.*

### Stop the games

It's past time for the Democrats in Congress to stop playing games with the lives of our troops in Iraq. Non-binding resolutions to pull out by a definite date are emboldening the enemy. Give the surge strategy a chance to work, and stop sending signals of a lack of solidarity with the military mission.

Yes, work on a diplomatic solution, but one backed by strength, resolve and national will to defeat terrorism. It's obvious that critics are acting from poll-driven political agendas rather than considerations for national security. Criticisms that we are less safe than before the Iraq invasion ignore the fact that we haven't been attacked on our homeland since 9/11.

*– Royal A. Brown III, Winter Haven, Fla.*

### 'Life and Taxes'

I enjoyed your centerfold diagram showing where our taxes go. It might be an interesting sequel to explain exactly what is done with this money. What is the Millennium Challenge Corp.? The Economic Support Fund? Why $1.3 billion to Egypt? Why $2.34 billion to Israel? Nursing-home care for veterans is only $2.2 billion. It seems our government needs to reassess its priorities.

*– Michael Skweir, Northampton, Pa.*

The responsibility our government assumes for all of us is quite far-reaching. However, I'm struck by the absence of any mention of earmarks, formerly known as "pork barrel," which allow our illustrious members of Congress to make extensive and expensive trips to all kinds of destinations. Also, they can be added onto some unsuspecting bill, amounting to a panacea for the home district and aiding them for the next election.

*– James Talley, Spring City, Tenn.*

### Changed lives

I am a student at the Western Blind Rehabilitation Center at the VA hospital in Palo Alto, Calif. Before I arrived two months ago, I believed I was just one of a few sight-impaired or blind veterans who had learned about the veterans blind rehabilitation centers by accident. Sadly, I learned that the majority discover these VA facilities by chance. This is deplorable and should be corrected by all means possible. Veterans publications are the best place to start.

VA has 10 blind rehabilitation centers in different parts of the country, the purpose of which are not to cure blindness, but rather to teach students how to live independently and learn new ways of doing things they did before they became blind or sight-impaired. I don't have the ability to describe how helpful, caring and respectful employees of this center are to every student. Because of what I have learned here, I will be able to do many of the things I thought I had lost forever.

To learn more about this program, contact the Visual Impairment Services Team coordinator at your nearest veterans hospital.

*– Sid Beausoleil, Anaconda, Mont.*

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# Flag desecration is not speech

During a recent antiwar demonstration in Portland, Ore., a U.S. soldier was burned in effigy, and a man pulled down his pants in front of women and children to defecate on a burning U.S. Flag. These gross displays don't happen every day. But they happen enough in America, where flag desecration was once an independent, illegal act. It is now treated as a constitutionally protected act of free speech. That such behavior – behavior no one could ever classify as "speech" – happens at all in this nation is reason enough to pass a flag-protection amendment. The American Legion will not rest until that happens.

When the Senate version of the flag amendment was defeated by a single vote in the 109th Congress last year, some hoped patriotic veterans would give up on the cause and walk away. In fact, our resolve to correct a mistake made by the U.S. Supreme Court 18 years ago has never been stronger.

Early in the 110th Congress, Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., introduced House Joint Resolution 12, better known as the flag amendment. Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the bill now rests with the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

The language of H.J. Res. 12 remains uncompromised: "The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." The legislation is simple and to the point. It doesn't give Congress the absolute right to protect the flag; rather, it makes it possible for Congress to send an amendment to the 50 states for ratification. If the amendment passes – and poll after poll conducted on behalf of The American Legion and the Citizens Flag Alliance suggests it overwhelmingly will – then U.S. citizens will again have the right to protect the single most reverential symbol of freedom and democracy the world has ever known.

This year, we've renewed our fight to return that right to the people. Passed in Salt Lake City during the 88th National Convention, Resolution 344 calls for The American Legion to "continue its efforts through affiliation with the Citizens Flag Alliance, Inc., to bring a successful conclusion to the grassroots campaign to amend the Constitution of the United States of America in order to return to the people their right to protect the flag from acts of physical desecration." We're doing this on the national level by meeting with members of Congress – our longtime allies, our opponents and those new to Washington who have yet to state their positions on the issue. Please do the same on the grassroots level by contacting your senators and representatives to ask for their support.

The narrow defeat of the flag amendment in the Senate last summer wasn't a mortal wound; it was progress, at last bringing us within a single vote of our goal. It's going to take a strong grassroots effort once again to return Old Glory to the national agenda. We will succeed by calling, writing, e-mailing and rallying at the local, state and national levels. We must capture and hold the attention of a Congress that might wrongly believe The American Legion will give up on the one thing we all agree unites us: our flag.

Paul A. Morin

*National Commander Paul A. Morin*

**MEMORANDA**

***NEW-LOOK LEGION ONLINE:*** If you haven't visited The American Legion Web site lately, it's time to click in. An ongoing project to make the site more user-friendly is off and running. New features include video streaming and a current-events page where visitors can catch the latest American Legion happenings and interact with National Headquarters. **www.legion.org**

***PAUSE FOR THE PLEDGE:*** This Flag Day, June 14, all members of The American Legion are asked to pause at 7 p.m. to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. American Legion posts across the country will use the opportunity to conduct solemn flag-disposal ceremonies. Anyone with unserviceable U.S. Flags should deliver them to American Legion members for proper retirement.

Visit the Americanism Division at **www.legion.org** for more U.S. Flag etiquette.

***LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER:*** To urge support for the flag amendment, contact members of Congress through The American Legion's Legislative Action Center online, **capwiz.com/legion/home/.** Through this site, you can reach any member of Congress via e-mail, as well as get updates on various pieces of legislation moving through both chambers.

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# Make federal tax cuts permanent

## YES

**Rep. Wally Herger, R-Calif.**

■ Herger serves on the House Ways and Means Committee.

## NO

**Rep. Rob Andrews, D-N.J.**

■ Andrews is a member of the House Budget Committee.

Our nation's economy was heading south when we entered the new millennium. The stock market bubble of the 1990s was starting to burst. Economic growth was stagnant. Layoffs were increasing, and recession was imminent.

Congress passed sweeping tax relief to limit the recession's damage and put our economy back on firm footing. The impact has been resounding. Since 2003, more than 7 million new jobs have been created. Veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq are getting back in the civilian job market. Our investment markets are strong. Despite lower tax rates, the federal treasury is collecting record revenues thanks to the strong economy. And far from benefiting only "the rich," tax relief since 2001 has resulted in high-income taxpayers paying a larger share of federal taxes.

Tax relief works on a host of levels. First, you can spend and invest your hard-earned money more effectively than Washington. The right kind of tax relief can also help spark economic growth and create jobs. U.S. consumers and entrepreneurs will spend and invest in our economy, if given the means to do so. Presidents Kennedy and Reagan understood this, and so does Bush. With his support, Congress lowered marginal tax rates across the board, eliminated tax penalties on married couples and increased the child tax credit to $1,000. In 2003, Congress reduced taxes on income from dividends and capital gains to spur investment and job creation. This relief is benefiting half of U.S. households, including millions of seniors. Additional relief has allowed Americans to keep nearly $1 trillion of their own money.

We should continue the pro-growth tax policies that have revitalized our economy and helped put millions of Americans back to work.

**THE HEART OF THE ISSUE**

***If made permanent, tax cuts adopted during the first term of the Bush administration can either stimulate further economic growth, as some believe, or deepen the federal deficit while primarily benefiting the rich.***

President Bush's tax cuts for the top 1 percent of income earners should have never been approved, because they have compounded our nation's dire budgetary straits. Thanks in part to these tax cuts, the federal government does not have sufficient money to pay for veterans health care or ensure that our troops in the field have the latest armor and equipment, let alone reduce health-care costs by covering the uninsured or help provide retirement security to the 69 million Americans without pensions. As a step toward fiscal responsibility, I support immediately rolling back the tax cuts for the top 1 percent. I frankly believe we should consider rolling back tax cuts for people making more than $200,000 per year, or the top 5 percent.

In 2007, we have a federal budget deficit of $172 billion that will grow to $362 billion if Social Security and Medicare surpluses are excluded. By eliminating the tax cut for the top 1 percent, we will save $66 billion a year over the next 10 years.

This, combined with the newly restored pay-as-you-go budget rules, could cut the deficit in half in two years. At that point, we would have the financial flexibility to begin to address health-care costs, education funding and other critical issues.

If we do nothing, we will continue to finance our debt by borrowing from countries like China, Japan and Saudi Arabia. Foreign investors, including foreign governments, have purchased 75 cents of every dollar of new debt since 2001.

We will also be unable to save Social Security, whose outlays will exceed income excluding interest by 2017 and all income by 2027. By 2040 all of its assets will be exhausted. Service on the debt – net interest paid – is one of the fastest-growing items in the budget.

**CONTACT YOUR LEADERS**

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The Honorable *(name)*, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 • Phone: (202) 225-3121

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*Ortega's return feeds Latin America's 21st-century leftist revival, building a bridge for terrorists and their supporters.*

**BY ALAN W. DOWD**

Preoccupied with wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and nukes in Iran and North Korea, the United States has a familiar problem right in its own back yard: communists and other far-left politicians are sweeping to power all across Latin America. Perhaps no one embodies this unexpected comeback better than Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, who returned to power last November. The former revolutionary has traded in his fatigues for a suit and tie, and he says he wants "to develop relations with the entire international community," including closer ties with the United States. But more than a quarter-century of history is hard to overcome.

**Backwards to the Future.** It's an irony of history that President Calvin Coolidge actually sent U.S. Marines to Nicaragua in the 1920s for the very same reason President Reagan armed Ortega's foes in the 1980s: to combat communism. Nicaraguan nationalist Augusto Sandino led a resistance movement against Coolidge's expeditionary force. After three years of evading the Marines and terrorizing Nicaraguan collaborators, Sandino's legend grew and became the Sandinistas.

Sandino may have hated the United States more than he loved his homeland. David Brooks, a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. State Department, observes that the official seal of Sandino's private army was a Nicaraguan rebel beheading a U.S. Marine.

Ortega calls Sandino his idol.

The Marines never caught Sandino, but military strongman Anastasio Somoza's troops did, and killed him in 1934. The right-wing dictatorship of the Somozas ruled Nicaragua until 1979, when Ortega's left-wing dictatorship took over. During their reign, the U.S.-backed Somozas usurped some 5 million square acres of Nicaraguan land and controlled all of the country's major industries. Writing in "The Fifty-Year Wound," historian Derek Leebaert observes that Washington's Central America policy during the Cold War often came down to backing the bad against the worse. This certainly proved true in Nicaragua after Somoza.

The Sandinista National Liberation Front, which Ortega rode and steered to power, was actually founded in Cuba in 1961. As historian Paul Johnson notes, in Ortega's Nicaragua, "Cuba acquired the first satellite of its own." Indeed, Ortega's reign was marked by close collaboration with Cuba, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. From 1980 to 1990, Moscow propped up Ortega with $1 billion annually. Ortega used Soviet aid to build an army bigger than anything fielded by his neighbors and to export the revolution into other parts of Central America. Helicopter gunships and heavy artillery began arriving in 1985, tanks even earlier.

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Leebaert writes that it wasn't until the 20th anniversary of their so-called revolution – devolution may be a more accurate term – that the Sandinistas finally admitted what they had denied all along: they had indeed funneled Soviet money and weapons to El Salvador. Even PBS, which had been critical of U.S. accusations against the Sandinistas, was forced to concede after Ortega's ouster, "It is by now a matter of public record that Reagan's assessment of the Sandinistas was largely correct, and the American public was in fact duped."

The Heritage Foundation reported at the time that Ortega also sought common cause with terrorist groups such as ETA and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, which opened an embassy in Managua in the early 1980s. Ortega even sent Nicaraguan officials to Lebanon and Libya for terrorist training. It paid off; by 1985, Sandinista commandos were participating in kidnapping operations and terrorist attacks in Colombia and Costa Rica. Not surprisingly, Ortega's actions qualified Nicaragua for membership in what Reagan called "a confederation of terrorist states … run by the strangest collection of misfits, loony-tunes and squalid criminals since the advent of the Third Reich." He spent $3 billion to challenge Ortega inside Nicaragua and another $4 billion to fight the communist virus Ortega was trying to spread throughout the region. Leebaert notes that even the pacifistic Jimmy Carter authorized CIA action against Ortega's Nicaragua.

Congress ultimately restricted U.S. aid to the anti-communist forces in Central America, or "Contras," as they came to be called. In response, as Leebaert details, administration officials raised funds from South Africa, Israel, Brunei, Saudi Arabia and Taiwan to keep arms and material flowing to the outgunned anti-communists. China even offered to send surface-to-air missiles to the Contras. This surreal environment opened the door to the Iran-Contra affair, in which officials on Reagan's National Security Council orchestrated arms sales to Iran in order to fund the Contra rebels – a violation of U.S. law – and gain the release of U.S. hostages in the Middle East.

With Washington gripped by clashes between the administration and Congress, Ortega did all the things we expect from communist dictators. Research conducted by the Heritage Foundation in the 1980s paints a grim picture:

- Ortega's government confiscated and redistributed private property.
- Just weeks after seizing power, Ortega's party also seized newspapers, TV stations and radio stations.
- The Ortega regime smothered freedom of religion. By 1986, the Catholic Church's newspaper and radio station were seized. Ortega also banned outdoor services.
- By 1988, Nicaraguan human-rights groups estimated that 8,200 political prisoners were rotting in Ortega's jails. Leebaert notes that Ortega's secret police and army were 10 times larger than anything Somoza wielded. Some 10,000 Cuban "advisers" offered assistance.
- At Ortega's direction, the Sandinistas forcibly relocated the Miskito Indians. To this day, organizations such as Nicaragua's Permanent Commission on Human Rights accuse the Sandinistas of genocide.
- Ortega cancelled promised elections and then held phony elections. In fact, in the election he claimed to win in 1985, fully two-thirds of precincts had only Sandinista party officials as observers.

Along the way, Ortega destroyed Nicaragua's economy. Historian Patrick Brogan has noted that by 1987, the standard of living in Ortega's Nicaragua had dropped by one-third; two days each week water was cut off to Managua, and the inflation rate reached into quadruple digits. By 1988, it was 36,000 percent.

When Ortega left office, defeated in a fair and free election, he transferred several large estates to himself and rewarded his Sandinista brethren with $2 billion of public assets. One wonders if he ever grasped the ironic parallel to the Somozas he helped oust. So much for the "people's revolution."

**Caracas Connection.** Given such a record, it's surprising that Nicaraguans would even tolerate an Ortega candidacy, let alone contemplate another Ortega presidency. To be fair, more than 60 percent of Nicaraguans voted against Ortega, who was elected with just 38 percent of the vote. In fact, his main rival, Eduardo Montealegre, won almost 30 percent of the vote. But thanks to Nicaragua's election laws – and a fractured opposition – Ortega's plurality was enough.

The electoral success of Ortega and other far-left candidates elsewhere in Latin America invites a worrisome prospect. While it is not fair to view Latin America as a monolith, we cannot overlook the fact that Ecuador, Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and, of course, Cuba all are governed by left-wing or outright Marxist leaders deeply committed to an anti-

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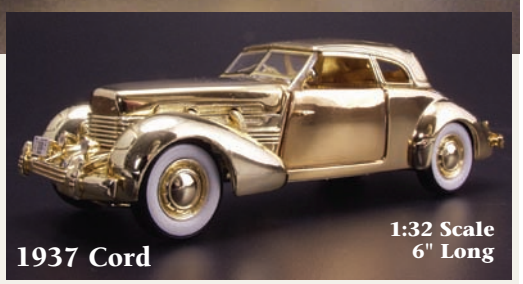


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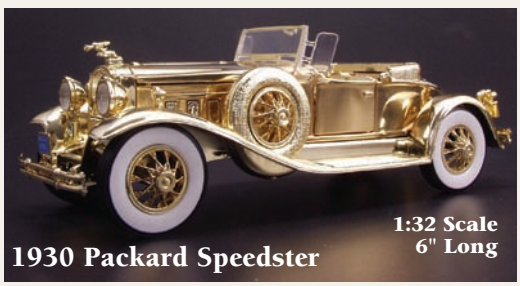


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American creed. Mexico and Peru narrowly escaped in 2006. Thanks to the demise of the Soviet Union, as former Mexican foreign minister Jorge Castaneda has observed, these latter-day Marxists no longer have to worry about the "geopolitical stigma" that once curbed the rise of communist movements in this hemisphere.

The nightmare scenario is for these governments to somehow link up and form an anti-U.S. bloc in this hemisphere. We have already seen glimpses of the damage this could inflict on the United States diplomatically and geopolitically. Ortega, for instance, has argued that his victory "will raise the morale of Latin America," adding, "we will spread the revolution." He now joins Castro, Venezuela's Hugo Chávez and an assortment of thugs masquerading as Latin American heads of state in the U.N.'s anti-American cheering section.

Chávez, it pays to recall, has accused the United States of genocide and, most famously, compared President George W. Bush to the devil during a tirade at the United Nations. He also has alleged that 9/11 was "self-inflicted." But it's not only his words that raise concern in Washington and other capitals. His actions are just as worrisome. Chávez has purchased 100,000 AK-47 rifles and has sought 50 MiG-29 fighter-jets from Russia, acquired large transport planes from Spain, canceled Venezuela's bilateral military exchange program with the United States, rallied a number of countries against the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), and in 2005 suspended Venezuelan cooperation with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency.

Chávez, who tried to seize power through a military coup in the early 1990s before his election in 1998, is emblematic of Latin America's evolving breed of leftist strongmen. As political scientist Javier Corrales details in a scathing indictment of Chávez published in *Foreign Policy* magazine, the Venezuelan leader has "found a way to make authoritarianism fashionable again." After all, he has rewritten the constitution, abolished the Senate, reconfigured the Supreme Court, created a private army loyal not to the state but to him, and taken control of the National Electoral Council, which verifies election results. Not surprisingly, Chávez cruised to an easy re-election last December. He now promises to eliminate presidential term limits.

Chávez also controls the country's oil consortium, with some $84 billion in revenue and climbing. And he has no problem using that revenue to his advantage. Last November, just a month ahead of the presidential election, he effectively bribed thousands of government employees by distributing $3 billion in oil profits in the form of Christmas bonuses.

An oil-rich Venezuela can do, and has done, far more harm to the U.S. economy than Castro ever could. Oil accounts for 90 percent of Venezuela's U.S.-bound exports. Although Chávez has never cut off shipments, he has at times threatened to do so, which sends the global petroleum market into chaos and U.S. consumers into sticker shock at the pump. There could be more than bluster and bravado here; the Congressional Research Service has reported concerns inside Washington that Chávez might try to supplant his U.S. market with China. Given that Venezuela pumps an average of 1.5 million barrels of oil per day for the United States, or about 11 percent of net oil imports, the results would be devastating for the U.S. economy. Ortega has directly benefited from his oil-rich crony in Caracas. In fact, prior to the vote in

## The rise, fall and rise of Daniel Ortega

**1979** The Somoza regime falls; Ortega's Sandinista National Liberation Front takes power

**1980** First attacks by anti-Sandinista forces known as the Contras; in the decade of the 1980s, an estimated 50,000 people would be killed in the Nicaraguan civil war

**1984** Ortega elected president in elections boycotted by opposition parties

**1988** U.S. Congress cuts off aid to the Contras

**1990** Ortega loses in free elections, rewards himself and his party cronies with $2 billion worth of Nicaraguan estates and property

**1996** Ortega loses a second election bid

**1998** Ortega's stepdaughter accuses him of serial sexual abuse

**2001** Ortega loses a third election bid

**2006** Thanks to a fractured opposition and assistance from Venezuela's Hugo Chávez, Ortega wins election with less than 40 percent of the vote; Washington promises "to develop a respectful relationship" with Nicaragua; Ortega calls for closer ties with the United States

Sources: *The Associated Press, The Christian Science Monitor*

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†Subject to eligibility. Restrictions apply. Please see accompanying important information about ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50.

Information about ADVAIR DISKUS

# ADVAIR DISKUS® 100/50, 250/50, 500/50

## (fluticasone propionate 100, 250, 500 mcg and salmeterol 50 mcg inhalation powder)

***What is the most important information I should know about ADVAIR DISKUS?***

In patients with asthma, long-acting beta$_2$-agonist medicines such as salmeterol (one of the medications in ADVAIR®) may increase the chance of death from asthma problems. In a large asthma study, more patients who used salmeterol died from asthma problems compared with patients who did not use salmeterol. So ADVAIR is not for patients whose asthma is well controlled on another asthma controller medicine such as low- to medium-dose inhaled corticosteroids or only need a fast-acting inhaler once in a while. Talk with your doctor about this risk and the benefits of treating your asthma with ADVAIR.

ADVAIR should not be used to treat a severe attack of asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) requiring emergency medical treatment.

ADVAIR should not be used to relieve sudden symptoms or sudden breathing problems. Always have a fast-acting inhaler with you to treat sudden breathing difficulty. If you do not have a fast-acting inhaler, contact your doctor to have one prescribed for you.

***What is ADVAIR DISKUS?***

There are two medicines in ADVAIR: Fluticasone propionate, an inhaled anti-inflammatory belonging to a group of medicines commonly referred to as corticosteroids; and salmeterol, a long-acting, inhaled bronchodilator belonging to a group of medicines commonly referred to as beta$_2$-agonists. There are 3 strengths of ADVAIR: 100/50, 250/50, 500/50.

**For Asthma**

- ADVAIR is approved for the maintenance treatment of asthma in patients 4 years of age and older. ADVAIR should only be used if your doctor decides that another asthma controller medicine alone does not control your asthma or that you need 2 asthma controller medications.
- The strength of ADVAIR approved for patients ages 4 to 11 years who experience symptoms on an inhaled corticosteroid is ADVAIR DISKUS 100/50. All 3 strengths are approved for patients with asthma ages 12 years and older.

**For COPD associated with chronic bronchitis**

ADVAIR 250/50 is the only approved dose for the maintenance treatment of airflow obstruction in patients with COPD associated with chronic bronchitis. The benefit of using ADVAIR for longer than 6 months has not been evaluated. The way anti-inflammatories work in the treatment of COPD is not well defined.

***Who should not take ADVAIR DISKUS?***

You should not start ADVAIR if your asthma is becoming significantly or rapidly worse, which can be life threatening. Serious respiratory events, including death, have been reported in patients who started taking salmeterol in this situation, although it is not possible to tell whether salmeterol contributed to these events. This may also occur in patients with less severe asthma.

You should not take ADVAIR if you have had an allergic reaction to it or any of its components (salmeterol, fluticasone propionate, or lactose). Tell your doctor if you are allergic to ADVAIR, any other medications, or food products. If you experience an allergic reaction after taking ADVAIR, stop using ADVAIR immediately and contact your doctor. Allergic reactions are when you experience one or more of the following: choking; breathing problems; swelling of the face, mouth and/or tongue; rash; hives; itching; or welts on the skin.

**Tell your doctor about the following:**

- If you are using your fast-acting inhaler more often or using more doses than you normally do (e.g., 4 or more inhalations of your fast-acting inhaler for 2 or more days in a row or a whole canister of your fast-acting inhaler in 8 weeks' time), it could be a sign that your asthma is getting worse. If this occurs, tell your doctor immediately.
- If you have been using your fast-acting inhaler regularly (e.g., four times a day). Your doctor may tell you to stop the regular use of these medications.
- If your peak flow meter results decrease. Your doctor will tell you the numbers that are right for you.
- If you have asthma and your symptoms do not improve after using ADVAIR regularly for 1 week.
- If you have been on an oral steroid, like prednisone, and are now using ADVAIR. You should be very careful as you may be less able to heal after surgery, infection, or serious injury. It takes a number of months for the body to recover its ability to make its own steroid hormones after use of oral steroids. Switching from an oral steroid may also unmask a condition previously suppressed by the oral steroid such as allergies, conjunctivitis, eczema, arthritis, and eosinophilic conditions. Symptoms of an eosinophilic condition can include rash, worsening breathing problems, heart complications, and/or feeling of "pins and needles" or numbness in the arms and legs. Talk to your doctor immediately if you experience any of these symptoms.
- Sometimes patients experience unexpected bronchospasm right after taking ADVAIR. This condition can be life threatening and if it occurs, you should immediately stop using ADVAIR and seek immediate medical attention.
- If you have any type of heart disease such as coronary artery disease, irregular heart beat or high blood pressure, ADVAIR should be used with caution. Be sure to talk with your doctor about your condition because salmeterol, one of the components of ADVAIR, may affect the heart by increasing heart rate and blood pressure. It may cause symptoms such as heart fluttering, chest pain, rapid heart rate, tremor, or nervousness.
- If you have seizures, overactive thyroid gland, liver problems, or are sensitive to certain medications for breathing.
- If your breathing problems get worse over time or if your fast-acting inhaler does not work as well for you while using ADVAIR. If your breathing problems worsen quickly, get emergency medical care.
- If you have been exposed to or currently have chickenpox or measles or if you have an immune system problem. Patients using medications that weaken the immune system are more likely to get infections than healthy individuals. ADVAIR contains a corticosteroid (fluticasone propionate) which may weaken the immune system. Infections like chickenpox and measles, for example, can be very serious or even fatal in susceptible patients using corticosteroids.

***How should I take ADVAIR DISKUS?***

ADVAIR should be used 1 inhalation, twice a day (morning and evening). ADVAIR should never be taken more than 1 inhalation twice a day. The full benefit of taking ADVAIR may take 1 week or longer.

If you miss a dose of ADVAIR, just skip that dose. Take your next dose at your usual time. Do not take two doses at one time.

Do not stop using ADVAIR unless told to do so by your doctor because your symptoms might get worse.

Do not change or stop any of your medicines used to control or treat your breathing problems. Your doctor will adjust your medicines as needed.

**When using ADVAIR, remember:**

- Never breathe into or take the DISKUS® apart.
- Always use the DISKUS in a level position.
- After each inhalation, rinse your mouth with water without swallowing.
- Never wash any part of the DISKUS. Always keep it in a dry place.
- Never take an extra dose, even if you feel you did not receive a dose.
- Discard 1 month after removal from the foil overwrap.
- Do not use ADVAIR with a spacer device.

Children should use ADVAIR with an adult's help as instructed by the child's doctor.

***Can I take ADVAIR DISKUS with other medications?***

Tell your doctor about all the medications you take, including prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

If you are taking ADVAIR, you should not take SEREVENT® DISKUS or Foradil® Aerolizer® for any reason.

If you take ritonavir (an HIV medication), tell your doctor. Ritonavir may interact with ADVAIR and could cause serious side effects. The anti-HIV medicines Norvir® Soft Gelatin Capsules, Norvir Oral Solution, and Kaletra® contain ritonavir.

No formal drug interaction studies have been performed with ADVAIR.

In clinical studies, there were no differences in effects on the heart when ADVAIR was taken with varying amounts of albuterol. The effect of using ADVAIR in patients with asthma while taking more than 9 puffs a day of albuterol has not been studied.

ADVAIR should be used with extreme caution during and up to 2 weeks after treatment with monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors or tricyclic antidepressants since these medications can cause ADVAIR to have an even greater effect on the circulatory system.

ADVAIR should be used with caution in people who are taking ketoconazole (an antifungus medication) or other drugs broken down by the body in a similar way. These medications can cause ADVAIR to have greater steroid side effects.

Generally, people with asthma should not take beta-blockers because they counteract the effects of beta$_2$-agonists and may also cause severe bronchospasm. However, in some cases, for instance, following a heart attack, selective beta-blockers may still be used if there is no acceptable alternative.

The ECG changes and/or low blood potassium that may occur with some diuretics may be made worse by ADVAIR, especially at higher-than-recommended doses. Caution should be used when these drugs are used together.

In clinical studies, there was no difference in side effects when ADVAIR was taken with methylxanthines (e.g., theophylline) or with FLONASE®.

***What are other important safety considerations with ADVAIR DISKUS?***

**Osteoporosis:** Long-term use of inhaled corticosteroids may result in bone loss (osteoporosis). Patients who are at risk for increased bone loss (tobacco use, advanced age, inactive lifestyle, poor nutrition, family history of osteoporosis, or long-term use of drugs such as corticosteroids) may have a greater risk with ADVAIR. If you have risk factors for bone loss, you should talk to your doctor about ways to reduce your risk and whether you should have your bone density evaluated.

**Glaucoma and cataracts:** Glaucoma, increased pressure in the eyes, and cataracts have been reported with the use of inhaled steroids, including fluticasone propionate, a medicine contained in ADVAIR. Regular eye examinations should be considered if you are taking ADVAIR.

**Lower respiratory tract infection:** Lower respiratory tract infections, including pneumonia, have been reported with the use of inhaled corticosteroids, including ADVAIR.

**Blood sugar:** Salmeterol may affect blood sugar and/or cause low blood potassium in some patients, which could lead to a side effect like an irregular heart rate. Significant changes in blood sugar and blood potassium were seen infrequently in clinical studies with ADVAIR.

**Growth:** Inhaled steroids may cause a reduction in growth velocity in children and adolescents.

**Steroids:** Taking steroids can affect your body's ability to make its own steroid hormones, which are needed during infections and times of severe stress to your body, such as an operation. These effects can sometimes be seen with inhaled steroids (but it is more common with oral steroids), especially when taken at higher-than-recommended doses over a long period of time. In some cases, these effects may be severe. Inhaled steroids often help control symptoms with less side effects than oral steroids.

**Yeast infections:** Patients taking ADVAIR may develop yeast infections of the mouth and/or throat ("thrush") that should be treated by their doctor.

**Tuberculosis or other untreated infections:** ADVAIR should be used with caution, if at all, in patients with tuberculosis, herpes infections of the eye, or other untreated infections.

***What are the other possible side effects of ADVAIR DISKUS?***

ADVAIR may produce side effects in some patients. In clinical studies, the most common side effects with ADVAIR included:

- Respiratory infections
- Throat irritation
- Hoarseness
- Sinus infection
- Yeast infection of the mouth
- Bronchitis
- Cough
- Headaches
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Musculoskeletal pain
- Dizziness
- Fever
- Ear, nose, and throat infections
- Nosebleed

Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the side effects with ADVAIR. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

***What if I am pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or nursing?***

Talk to your doctor about the benefits and risks of using ADVAIR during pregnancy, labor, or if you are nursing. There have been no studies of ADVAIR used during pregnancy, labor, or in nursing women. Salmeterol is known to interfere with labor contractions. It is not known whether ADVAIR is excreted in breast milk, but other corticosteroids have been detected in human breast milk. Fluticasone propionate, like other corticosteroids, has been associated with birth defects in animals (e.g., cleft palate and fetal death). Salmeterol showed no effect on fertility in rats at 180 times the maximum recommended daily dose.

***What other important tests were conducted with ADVAIR?***

There is no evidence of enhanced toxicity with ADVAIR compared with the components administered separately. In animal studies with doses much higher than those used in humans, salmeterol was associated with uterine tumors. Your healthcare professional can tell you more about how drugs are tested on animals and what the results of these tests may mean to your safety.

***For more information on ADVAIR DISKUS***

This page is only a brief summary of important information about ADVAIR DISKUS. For more information, talk to your doctor. You can also visit www.ADVAIR.com or call 1-888-825-5249. Patients receiving ADVAIR DISKUS should read the medication guide provided by the pharmacist with the prescription.

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Nicaragua, Chávez shipped an estimated 400,000 barrels of oil to Nicaragua in care of Ortega, who then used it to help sway the election. We can expect more, and worse, of such mischief and manipulation from these two brothers of the revolution.

In addition, the economic and human costs of the flow of drugs from Latin America are sure to rise, given the policies of Chávez and his partner in Bolivia, Evo Morales, who has effectively quit the drug war by promising to decriminalize coca production. Chávez has reportedly poured tens of millions of dollars into Bolivia to prop up Morales and promote the sort of economic and political changes that are transforming Venezuela into an elected dictatorship.

Finally and predictably, this red relapse exposes the U.S. southern flank to a range of new security challenges. Beijing is using both its checkbook and its socialist credentials to gain unprecedented access into Latin America. A *Financial Times* analysis found that almost half of China's direct foreign investment is flowing to Latin America. From 2004 to 2005, for example, China doubled the volume of bilateral trade and investment with Venezuela. It has promised to spend billions to improve infrastructure in Argentina, Brazil and Chile.

In a 2006 interview with *USA Today*, a spokesman for U.S. Southern Command conceded that Beijing "has approached every country in our area of responsibility" and has even exchanged senior military officials and provided aid or training to Ecuador, Jamaica, Bolivia, Cuba, Chile and Venezuela. In response to this drift into the red, Washington recently resumed military training operations with 11 Latin American and Caribbean countries. The United States had lost influence in the vital region after a ban was placed on certain training partnerships in 2002, officials say.

**Red Carpet.** The threats are not limited to reruns from Cold War I or previews of Cold War II:

- The State Department concluded in 2006 that Venezuela had "virtually ceased its cooperation in the global war on terror," adding that Chávez was tolerating terrorists on his territory and seeking closer relations with Iran. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited Venezuela in late 2006.
- In January 2004, concerns about Islamic terrorists based in Central America grounded flights inbound from Mexico City. Later that year, CBS News reported that the Honduran government announced that al-Qaeda was trying to recruit Hondurans for embassy attacks. The threat was serious enough for Honduras to declare a national terror alert that summer. In addition, U.S. officials believe that terror-cell leader Adnan el Shukrijumah, who was spotted in Honduras in 2004, met with leaders of an El Salvadoran gang that specializes in smuggling illegals into the United States.
- Since Sept. 11, 2001, Washington has been concerned about the lawless borderlands of Uruguay, Brazil and Paraguay, where Hezbollah and al-Qaeda terrorists are known to gather. In short, al-Qaeda and other jihadists are attempting to gain a toehold in Latin America – or perhaps better said, a launching pad.

Given the way Ortega rolled out the red carpet for terrorist leaders and organizations in the 1980s, his return to power should give us pause in this new age of terror. After all, Ortega remains intimately tied to the Castro regime, which remains on the U.S. terrorist list. Plus, it pays to recall that in 2003, on the eve of the Iraq war, Ortega wrote an open letter to Saddam Hussein offering the moral support of his country. Writing from Cuba, he heaped scorn on the United States for "a continuation of the politics of death" and offered the Butcher of Baghdad "solidarity from the people of Nicaragua, defenders and lovers of peace."

Some argue that free trade and economic engagement are the cure to Latin America's Marxist relapse, but it is precisely globalization and free trade that have spurred the rise of these leftist leaders. Indeed, in a decade-plus marked by Washington's push for NAFTA, CAFTA and the FTAA, the United States has arguably been more engaged in a positive way in Latin America than any time in history. But the result has been a backlash against free trade, capitalism and "neoliberalism," to borrow the parlance of the latter-day Marxists now in charge across Latin America. Ortega himself promises an end to "savage capitalism." Morales has called the FTAA "a policy of genocide." In other words, Washington's Latin American policy will be tricky for some time to come. Ortega, Chávez and the other new-era revolutionaries will make sure of that.

*Alan W. Dowd is a writer based in Indianapolis and a contributing editor to* The American Legion Magazine.

# THE FAR ENEMY

**Osama bin Laden's theory that America lacks the will to fight a long war has yet to be proven wrong.**

BY DINESH D'SOUZA

COMMENTARY

The strategy of radical Muslims during the 1980s and early 1990s was articulated by Abd al-Salaam al-Faraj, an engineering graduate at Cairo University who was implicated in the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat. Faraj's tract, "The Neglected Duty," argued that Muslims are prevented from establishing an Islamic state by their corrupt and apostate rulers. Faraj made the case for radical Muslims to fight against their rulers, who he called "the near enemy," over distant countries like Israel or the United States, which Faraj called "the far enemy." The reasoning behind this strategy was that it is a waste of time to take on remote adversaries when the people betraying Islam and thwarting radical Muslims are the ones ruling the Muslim world.

Virtually all the organizations of radical Islam adopted Faraj's strategy, including Ayman al-Zawahiri's Islamic Jihad organization in Egypt, the Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan, and the Muslim Brotherhood. "The road to Jerusalem runs through Cairo," Zawahiri famously said. What he meant is that radical Muslims must first take power in a Muslim country like Egypt, after which they will have a strong base to launch a war against Israel. Osama bin Laden also endorsed this strategy. His main emphasis during the 1980s was on driving the Soviets out of Afghanistan so it could become a Muslim fundamentalist state. When that succeeded, bin Laden returned to Saudi Arabia and focused his efforts on changing the corrupt and insufficiently orthodox policies of the Saudi government.

In the two decades before 9/11, Islamic radicals launched a series of attacks aimed at weakening or overthrowing their regional leaders. In Syria, the Muslim Brotherhood sought to overthrow the dictatorship of Hafez Assad. In Saudi Arabia, a group of radical Muslims seized the Grand Mosque in Mecca. In 1981, a disciple of Faraj named Khalid Islambouli assassinated Sadat. Islamic radicals killed other senior Egyptian officials, although their attempt on President Hosni Mubarak's life was unsuccessful. In 1995, a radical group firebombed the Egyptian embassy in Pakistan. Two years later, Islamic radicals detonated explosives at an archaeological site near the city of Luxor in Egypt. The blast killed between 50 and 100 civilians – Egyptians as well as tourists. The radicals spilled a lot of blood during this period, but it was mostly Muslim blood.

Then, in the mid- to late-1990s, a segment of the radical movement decided on a new strategy. In a fateful shift, Zawahiri abandoned the tactic of fighting the "near enemy" and decided to take the battle to the "far enemy," specifically the United States. Montasser al-Zayyat, a former associate, said Zawahiri's decision astounded Muslim radicals and "surprised the whole world." Groups like the Muslim Brotherhood disagreed so strongly with Zawahiri that its leaders publicly criticized him and severed ties with Islamic Jihad. But Zawahiri found allies elsewhere. In Afghanistan, Zawahiri met Osama bin Laden, who was also shifting his sights from the near enemy to the far enemy. Soon, Zawahiri's Islamic Jihad merged with bin Laden's group, and a new organization – al-Qaeda – was born.

If Zawahiri and bin Laden had not changed course, 9/11 would not have happened. Why, then, did they do so? In his book "The Far Enemy," political scientist Fawaz Gerges argues that the radical Muslims' strategy of fighting the near enemy proved unsuccessful, leading them to try something else. He points out that by killing Muslim civilians, the radicals provoked a massive outpouring of protest from the community. These public reactions provided justification for the regimes to mount crackdowns on the radicals. In Saudi Arabia, the regime ousted and then beheaded the radical Muslims who took over the Grand Mosque. Egypt launched a systematic campaign to imprison or kill radical dissidents. Using its customary brutality, the Assad regime in Syria massacred thousands of Muslim Brotherhood members and sympathizers.

"When jihadis met their Waterloo on homefront battles," Gerges writes, they "turned their guns against the West in an effort to stop the revolutionary ship from sinking." This may be correct as far as it goes, but it does not go very far. Gerges fails to explain why Muslim radicals like Zawahiri and bin Laden, who apparently could not defeat their local governments, concluded that they could defeat the vastly more formidable United States.

Zawahiri and bin Laden themselves answer this question. In his book "Knights Under the Prophet's Banner," Zawahiri writes, "The battle today cannot be fought on a regional level without taking into account the global hostility toward us." Infidel tyrants like Mubarak are simply "hired policemen who are faithfully serving the occupiers and enemies of the Muslim nation." Moreover, "It

## PUBLICITY NOTICE OF U.S. MINT LEGAL TENDER FIRST RELEASE

# Vault tubes of new coins go to public for $20

**GET THIS:** Here's a stack of a dozen new Presidential Dollars that are extremely uncommon because they're carved with edge lettering bearing date, Mint mark, IN GOD WE TRUST and E PLURIBUS UNUM.

# Everyone is getting the first Presidential Coin Free

**By SHAWN OYLER**
UNIVERSAL MEDIA SYNDICATE

(UMS) - There's a "pot of gold" waiting for everyone who loves being first.

Starting at precisely 7:45 a.m. today, the very first Presidential Coins ever to be minted by the U.S. Government are being handed out to the public with every single vault tube.

And who's to thank for this massive give-away effort? Well, it's not the government. It's the World Reserve Monetary Exchange.

And we'll even give you the direct Hotline to call so you can be among the first to get yours free right now.

People everywhere will be trying to get their hands on these magnificent stacks of coins with the never-before-seen edge markings. But only those who get in before the 7-day deadline are being handed a brand new never-circulated Presidential Dollar Coin free with every single $20 sealed vault tube.

Officials at the World Reserve are bracing for the explosion of calls. But, don't give up calling if you don't get through the first time. Keep trying.

"It's a miracle we were able to set up special Hotlines in three Regional Distribution Zones in an effort to maintain order across the country. We feared the flood of calls could bring us to our knees but we are now equipped to handle everyone who is trying to get through to get the coins," said Stephen Speakman, Director of Hotline Operations for the World Reserve Monetary Exchange.

All this is happening because the World Reserve has revealed it will release its secretly located hoard of $13 million worth of never-circulated Presidential Coins in vault sealed tubes to prevent them from ever being introduced into commerce. It's the

only way to maintain their value as never-circulated coins.

"This is what everyone wants but so few will actually have. So many will be left with just ordinary circulated coins if they can even find them in their bank change. That's why we are so widely advertising our plans to give away the never-circulated Presidential Coins free," said Speakman.

Those who do beat the order deadline will be among the first to also get a free Presidential Dollar Coin so they can handle it, show it off and still keep the valuable vault tube sealed and perfectly intact.

The U.S. Mint® is required to honor each President with a single Presidential $1 Coin, with a different President appearing every ninety days. That's why everyone is trying to get the Washington dollar coin right now since it is the first of forty Presidential Dollars to be released during the inaugural year for the series.

"That means there will be forty sealed vault tubes in all, each containing twelve never-circulated Presidential Coins. That's 480 coins. But with all forty of the free coins everybody is getting, it becomes a spectacular collection of 520 never-circulated coins in all, loaded into two separate heavy vault boxes. Only those lucky enough to get in on the vault boxes now will be among the first to be automatically taken care of with all of the new Presidential Dollars to ever be minted for the next ten years," explained Speakman.

The Presidential Dollars are just now starting to slowly make their way into the National Banking System. But Banks will not honor requests for the free coins. And Banks will never have crystal-clear sealed vault tubes of the never-circulated coins that show off the rare edge markings. Claims for these free coins which are in never-circulated condition are only being honored by the World Reserve for the next seven days and only for those who beat the deadline for the sealed vault tubes.

"Just look at that stack of coins. When Americans get their hands on those, they are really going to do a double take," Speakman said. ■

■ **JACKPOT:** These two massive vault boxes contain the sealed vault tubes for the complete collection of forty Presidential Dollars, 480 coins in all. Values fluctuate, but just think if you had saved 2 vault boxes of uncirculated Eisenhower Dollars from 1973. They would now be worth $6,912.00. It's a real steal at just $20 plus shipping for these crystal clear sealed vault tubes that show off the rare edge markings and protect the coin's never-circulated value.

# How to get free Presidential Coins

Every reader of this magazine who beats the order deadline will get a free never-circulated Presidential Dollar Coin with every single sealed vault tube, at just twenty dollars plus shipping. Rations of these coins are uncertain because each coin is only being allotted 93 days. So once they're gone, they're gone and by law once the U.S. Mint shuts off they will never be minted again. In an effort to maintain an orderly distribution of the coins, claim lines have been established in three Regional Distribution Zones.

**1** **Find the Regional Distribution Zone you live in on the map below**

**2** **Call the Claim Line set up for your Distribution Zone for the next 7 days only**

**If you live in Zone 1**
Call: **1-800-503-8148** Lines open 7:45 AM - 8:45 PM

**If you live in Zone 2**
Call: **1-800-625-7094** Lines open 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM

**If you live in Zone 3**
Call: **1-800-710-8923** Lines open 8:15 AM - 9:15 PM

**CLAIM CODE: PD879**

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is clear that the Jewish-Crusader alliance, led by the United States, will not allow any Islamic force to reach power in any of the Muslim countries." In short, Zawahiri concluded that the near enemy could not be defeated because of the far enemy. "Therefore," he wrote, "we must move the battle to the enemy's grounds to burn the hands of those who ignite fire in our countries." What would give radical Muslims the idea that they could attack the United States without being decimated? From bin Laden, we learn that radical Muslims plotted the 9/11 attack after concluding that the far enemy was less threatening and more vulnerable than the near enemy. Despite the great wealth and power of the United States, bin Laden and his associates became convinced they could launch a devastating strike on U.S. soil and win the ensuing battle. He had witnessed a united force of Muslim fighters, the so-called Arab Afghans, drive the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan. The Arab Afghans, bin Laden notes, "managed to crush the greatest empire known to mankind. The so-called superpower vanished into thin air." Following the Soviet collapse, he began to devise a plan to inflict on America a fate "just like that of the Soviets – military defeat, political breakup, ideological downfall and economic bankruptcy."

*Between 1996 and 1999, Osama bin Laden granted personal interviews to a number of media outlets, raising the question of why so many reporters could find the terror mastermind but the United States could not.* AP

Even though the demise of the Soviet Union left the United States as the world's only superpower, bin Laden determined that "America is very much weaker than Russia." He based his opinion on U.S. military conduct in previous years. He saw that when America found itself in an unpopular, drawn-out guerrilla war in Vietnam, it withdrew. He no doubt recalled the humiliating ineffectiveness of President Carter during the Iran hostage crisis. He saw that when a suicide bomber blew up the Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, killing 241 U.S. servicemembers, President Reagan did not retaliate but meekly recalled U.S. troops from the region. He compounded the error with arms-for-hostages deals. In the Gulf War, George H.W. Bush assembled a coalition that ejected Saddam Hussein from Kuwait but did not pursue his troops all the way to Baghdad. Americans, bin Laden concluded, love life so much that they are not willing to risk drawn-out conflict. In short, they are cowards. When 18 U.S. troops were killed in Somalia in 1993, President Clinton ordered a withdrawal. As bin Laden saw it, "America fled in the dark as fast as it could."

While bin Laden's perception of American weakness was based on U.S. actions over three decades, it was during the 1990s that he decided to test his theory by launching a series of attacks on U.S. targets and gauging the response. These were serious attacks that produced escalating levels of damage. Yet in every case the United States reacted either by doing nothing or with desultory counter-attacks that did no harm to the perpetrators and actually made the United States look ridiculous in the eyes of the Muslim world. Consequently, bin Laden and Zawahiri decided that the size and wealth of the American Sodom was no match for the will of the Muslim true believer. He resolved to hit the far enemy in its vital organs, the strike that occurred on 9/11.

For years, leading intellectuals had been warning that the U.S. approach to the Muslim world was driven by hateful and deep-rooted prejudices about Muslims. While such prejudices seemed to be confirmed by the actions of the radical Muslims who tried to blow up the World Trade Center in 1993, the first terrorist attack on U.S. soil, scholars like Edward Said and John Esposito ridiculed the stereotype of the fanatical Muslim terrorist. Shortly before 9/11, Esposito published a book titled "The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?" He concluded that the threat was mostly a myth. Said warned that as a result of U.S. ignorance, "the Islamic threat is made to seem disproportionately fearsome." He poured derision on the idea that "there is a worldwide conspiracy behind every explosion," a fantasy he attributed to "the menace theory of Islam." This analysis shaped the response of Clinton and his advisers to al-Qaeda attacks on U.S. targets.

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Consistent with an approach that treated foreign policy as an extension of domestic policy, the U.S. government viewed the first World Trade Center attack as an internal political problem. In fact, Clinton warned against "over-reaction." His advisers persuaded him not to bolster anti-Muslim stereotypes.

In 1996, bin Laden declared war on the United States. That same year radical Muslims detonated a massive bomb at the Khobar Towers military installation in Saudi Arabia, killing 19 U.S. soldiers. Clinton denounced the attack but took no action to retaliate. On Aug. 7, 1998, al-Qaeda again escalated its operations, this time launching bomb attacks against U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, causing more than 200 deaths and wounding more than 4,000. Interrupting impeachment proceedings over the Monica Lewinsky scandal, Clinton ordered a half-hearted counterstrike against what turned out to be a pharmaceutical plant in the Sudan and against al-Qaeda facilities in Afghanistan that were largely unoccupied. But the attacks on U.S. targets continued. On Oct. 12, 2000, al-Qaeda orchestrated a suicide attack on the USS *Cole*, blasting a 40-foot hole in the ship's hull and killing 17 sailors.

In the final months of his administration, Clinton was notified on several occasions of intelligence reports locating bin Laden. His advisers argued that the United States should seek to arrest bin Laden but not try to kill him. Clinton authorized a lethal attack if the opportunity presented itself, but in every case he and his advisers decided not to act. The Clinton team refused to provide arms to Ahmed Shah Massoud and his Northern Alliance to enable them to successfully attack bin Laden and his Taliban sponsors. National Security Adviser Sandy Berger stressed that the intelligence on bin Laden's whereabouts was never 100-percent reliable and emphasized the high risk of civilian casualties. Attorney General Janet Reno warned she would not support any attack that was inconsistent with international law. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said an attack on Muslims might derail the peace process. The Clinton team was ever mindful of the risk of political embarrassment if the operation failed.

In a speech in October 2001, Clinton insisted, "I tried to take bin Laden out the last four years I was in office." More recently, Clinton told journalist Chris Wallace that he simply did not have the opportunity to get bin Laden. Yet even Clinton's own anti-terrorism adviser, Richard Clarke, writes that in the years leading up to 9/11, "I still do not understand why it was impossible to find a competent group ... who could locate bin Laden and kill him." Clarke was even tougher on the administration of George W. Bush, who he also believes has not done enough to kill or capture bin Laden. Former CIA analyst Michael Scheuer estimates that the U.S. government missed "about 10 chances to capture bin Laden or kill him."

This is obvious when we recall that between 1996, when bin Laden moved from the Sudan to Afghanistan, and 2000 he was not in deep hiding. In his book "Ghost Wars," Steve Coll reports that bin Laden lived in a house provided by Mullah Omar near Kandahar. He freely moved through the territories of eastern Afganistan that were under Taliban control. He talked openly on his satellite phone, calling media representatives in the Middle East and London to dictate statements and issue fatwas. His wives and children were routinely spotted in the local market. "On some Fridays," Coll writes, "he delivered sermons at Kandahar's largest mosque."

During this period, a number of journalists from around the world interviewed bin Laden. Writer Robert Fisk interviewed him in Afghanistan in 1996, as did a BBC journalist. Later that year, bin Laden met with Pakistani reporter Abdel Bari Atwan in Kandahar. Fisk secured another interview with bin Laden in early 1997. In March 1997, the al-Qaeda leader spoke in person to Peter Arnett of CNN. In early 1998, bin Laden met with John Miller of ABC News. In May 1998, he conducted a press conference near Khost in southeastern Afghanistan. Several Pakistani journalists and a Chinese reporter attended. In January 1999, bin Laden granted a personal interview to a journalist affiliated with *Time*. Isn't it strange that all these people could find bin Laden but the U.S. government could not?

The conclusion seems unavoidable. Finding bin Laden has not always been a priority. Moreover, radical Muslims made the decision to attack the United States on 9/11 because they decided that America was cowardly and weak. They came to this conclusion as a result of the actions – and inaction – of five consecutive administrations.

*This article is adapted from Dinesh D'Souza's latest book, "The Enemy at Home: The Cultural Left and Its Responsibility for 9/11 (Doubleday, 2007)."*
*D'Souza is the Rishwain Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Contact him at* ***dineshjdsouza@aol.com.***

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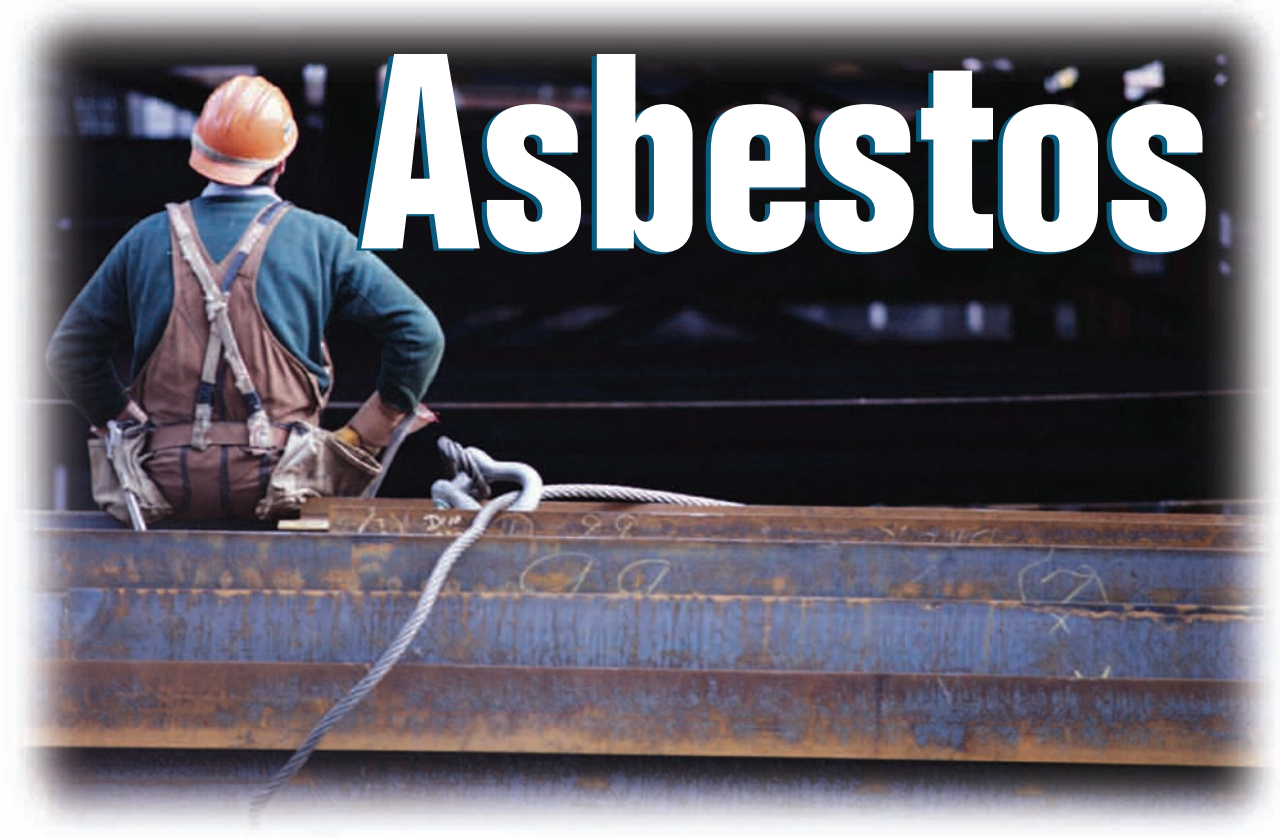


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# A Soldier's Husband

***Parental duties fall on dad's shoulders when mom is serving her country.***

**BY STEVE BROOKS**

Thirty-two-year-old Jeff Walker is proud of his wife's decision to enlist in the U.S. Army. It's just not always easy dealing with the reality. Since she began serving last summer, he's taken on the role of stay-at-home dad for their two young children.

When his wife, Mikijo, went through basic and advanced training at Fort Jackson, S.C., and Fort Sam Houston, Texas, last year, Jeff learned what it's like to raise 5-year-old daughter Martika and 10-month-old son Chanse on his own. He also grew accustomed to the spartan lifestyle of a military spouse. When the Walkers moved to San Antonio, they left many of their belongings behind and got a 1,000-square-foot apartment – just Dad and the kids, a television and DVD player, along with some personal and kitchen items. Some of Martika's toys – including a toy gun that goes with the Army costume Martika wore on Halloween when she dressed up as her mommy – add color to a relatively vacant living room. At first the family slept on air mattresses; now they have a bed that a neighbor loaned them.

When Mikijo joined the Army, Jeff made a discovery: support networks abound for wives of U.S. servicemen stationed away from home, but husbands of military women find support in few places. There are times when he feels that his Internet screen name, "Her Houseboy," is more than an inside joke.

"The hardest part for me, actually, is not working," he says. "I'd had a job pretty much every day since I was 14, and it's not really me to not work. The fact that my wife is making all the money now is tough. She sees that everything is taken care of. Before, that was my job." He left a job of nine years with the Oregon Department of Transportation when his wife went into the service.

"I'm really proud of what she's doing, and I respect her quite a bit for this. I don't know if I would ever call it being upset with her for joining. Both of us decided for her to do it. But there have been times," he concedes.

Mikijo, 27, is training to join more than 200,000 American women now serving, the largest population of active-duty female servicemembers in U.S.

***ABOVE:*** *Jeff Walker, 32, holds his 10-month old son Chanse in their apartment in San Antonio. His wife, Mikijo, joined the U.S. Army last summer, and Jeff quit his job to be a stay-at-home dad for Chanse and Martika, their 5-year-old daughter.* L.A. Shively

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military history. Her husband says he finds it hard to believe there are 20 other men out there with wives serving in the armed forces, let alone thousands.

"There's very little for guys in this situation," he says. "I have a few people who I talk to online, but they are mostly wives. Very seldom do I go on message boards anymore because it gets so frustrating. There just don't seem to be a lot of guys out there like me. And even with the wives I talk to, it's just hard to explain to them that things are different for a guy. You deal with things differently, and you're dealing with different things."

**On His Own.** Mikijo went through basic training in South Carolina while Jeff and the children remained in Cascade Locks, Ore. "The first day wasn't that bad," Jeff explains. "Actually, the first two or three days weren't that bad. But after that, it started to hit me that she was gone, and I was the one at home with the kids. It was probably a good thing I had a short haircut because I would have pulled my hair out otherwise. (Chanse) was four months old at the time. Dealing with him on my own was a big shock."

While Mikijo completed combat medic training at Fort Sam Houston, Jeff spent his days with the kids. Martika likes watching DVDs. Chanse likes Cheerios – and getting his sister's attention any way he can. Jeff quickly learned how single parenting can shrink a guy's social circle.

"I'm real bad at meeting people," he admits. "I tend to keep people out of my circle if I don't know them. I just do a lot of sitting around here waiting to hear from Mikijo. I try to come up with things for us to do to get us out of the apartment. It's just different, though. When you live on a (military) base, you're around people dealing with the same things. It's not like that here."

Lack of adult company isn't the only change. Walker grew up in Cascade Locks – a town of 1,500 people – with his family always close by. In San Antonio, a fast-growing city with a population of more than 1.1 million, he found himself in a completely different world – a lonelier one.

"In Cascade Locks, if I let Martika walk downtown by herself, within five minutes someone would call me to tell me they saw her. We moved here and didn't know anyone. It used to be that my parents or her parents were right there. My folks, they weren't real happy about this. They were like, 'Why in the hell do you want to do this?' My family is big into family. It wasn't so much the fact that Mikijo was going into the Army. It was the fact that we'd be leaving. My parents like to see the kids a lot. But they've really supported the decision ... after the initial shock."

Young Martika has mixed emotions. She describes her new home in San Antonio as "cool." She's made some friends. But, she adds, "I miss my uncles and aunts, and I miss all my cousins. I miss grandmas and papas. And it's warm for us here. We're from Oregon. Here, I sweat."

Moving was an easy financial decision. "For the cost of us to fly down here once or twice a month to visit, stay in a hotel and rent a car, it made more sense to move," Jeff says. "And I didn't want to take a chance of flying down here with the kids to visit and then find out she didn't have leave that weekend. Staying here, I'm giving the kids a chance to see her as much as possible, and anything I can do to give them more time with her I'm going to do. And it's a good practice run for me for when she gets deployed. I didn't want to get stuck overseas my first time out of Cascade Locks."

Life in San Antonio is centered on keeping his family whole. "I pretty much do everything with the kids," Jeff says. "I'm real picky about who watches my kids. We always had family who watched them. Having someone watch them who isn't family seems kind of odd to me."

**An Uncertain Future.** The Walkers saw the Army as a window of opportunity. "She had actually

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*Mikijo Walker, 27, joined the U.S. Army last summer. Now expecting her third child, she'll deploy this month.* L.A. Shively

*Martika Walker poses in her Halloween costume. She went as her mother, an Army soldier.* L.A. Shively

talked about going into the service ever since high school, and it got to a point where financially it would be better for us," Jeff says. "With my job, they were starting to change the retirement. It used to be I would pay into it, and they would match what I paid. But a couple of years ago they changed it to where all you get out of it is what you put into it. And I was starting to pay more out of my own pocket for benefits. After nine years, I was making around $1,600 per month after taxes. We looked at all that and decided that (Mikijo) would give it a shot."

Her pay in San Antonio, approximately $1,500 per month, almost recouped what Jeff had been making. But the housing allowance and insurance benefits are where the Walkers come out ahead, Jeff said. They haven't yet decided on a long-term military career. For now, Mikijo is focused on finishing her training and looking forward to deployment. Jeff and the children hope to go with her and live on base while strengthening their finances. "We want to build that back up," Jeff says. "We'll live on the base if she's deployed stateside. If she goes somewhere we can't go, we'll most likely go back to Cascade Locks."

Obviously, a possible deployment to Iraq has crossed both their minds. Jeff says he will deal with if it happens, acknowledging that his tour as a stay-at-home dad may last longer than expected. He also realizes things change abruptly for military families. When Mikijo enlisted, they believed military service would translate into a good civilian job later.

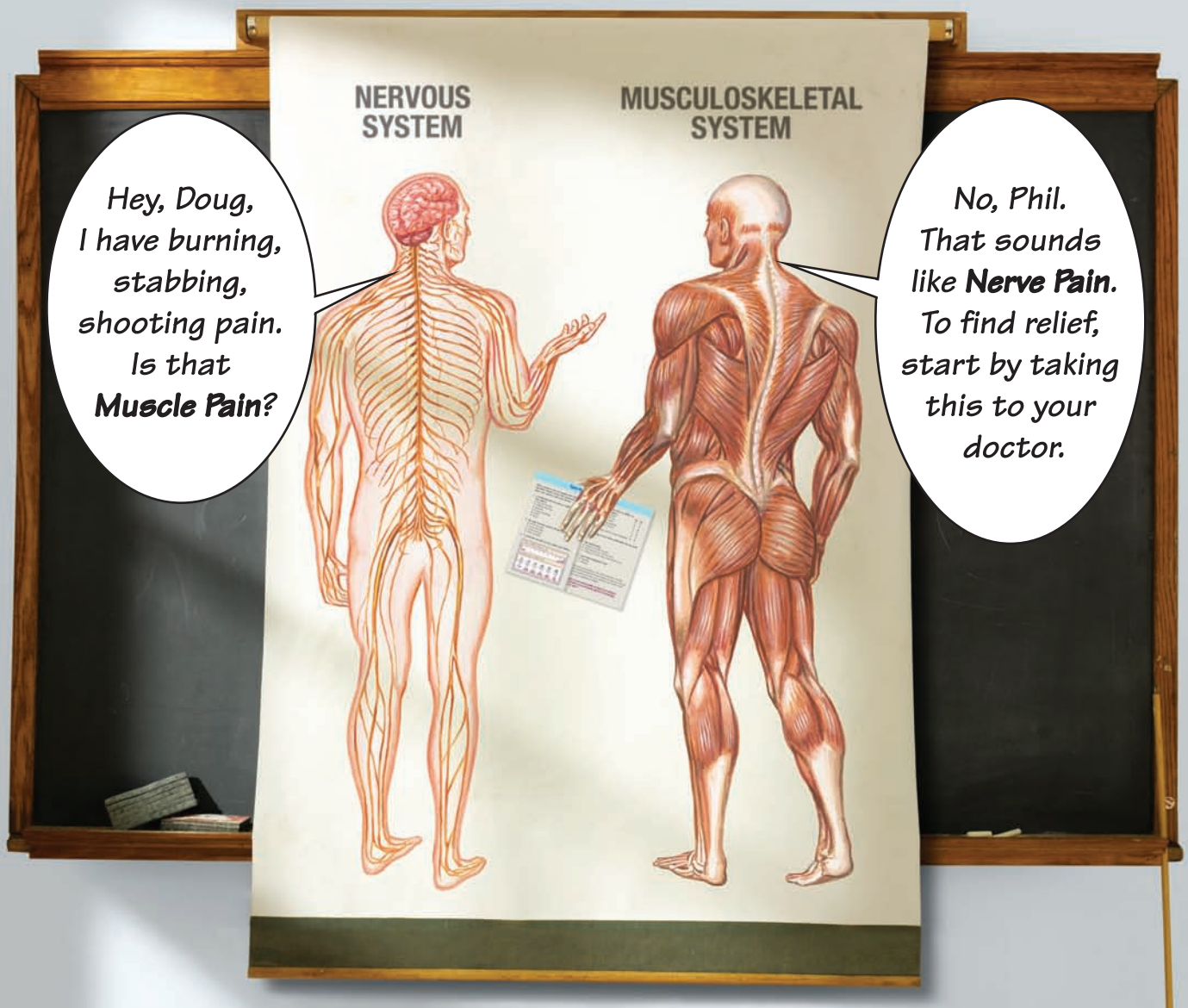
"When she said she wanted to do this, I told her if she did it, then she needed to do it to set up a career," Jeff says. "The way it was going with my career, I could have retired at age 47 with 30 years in. I didn't want her to jump into the Army, do it four years, and then come home so we could start over again.

"We're hoping that things change once she gets her duty station and it becomes more like a job than a life. It won't be 24/7. This is a lot harder than either one of us thought it would be. If this ain't the hard part, I'm going to go nuts."

Mikijo recently finished her training at Fort Sam Houston and was transferred to Fort Campbell, Ky. She and Jeff learned they are expecting their third child. Her unit will be deployed to another duty station in November, perhaps overseas, and she will join it this summer.

Past that, the Walkers are unsure where the Army life will take them. They are following Mom, the soldier, while Dad makes sure that wherever they go, they go together.

*Steve Brooks is senior editor of* The American Legion Magazine.

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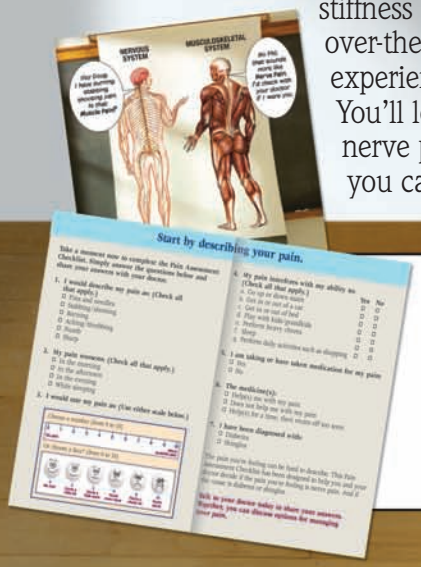


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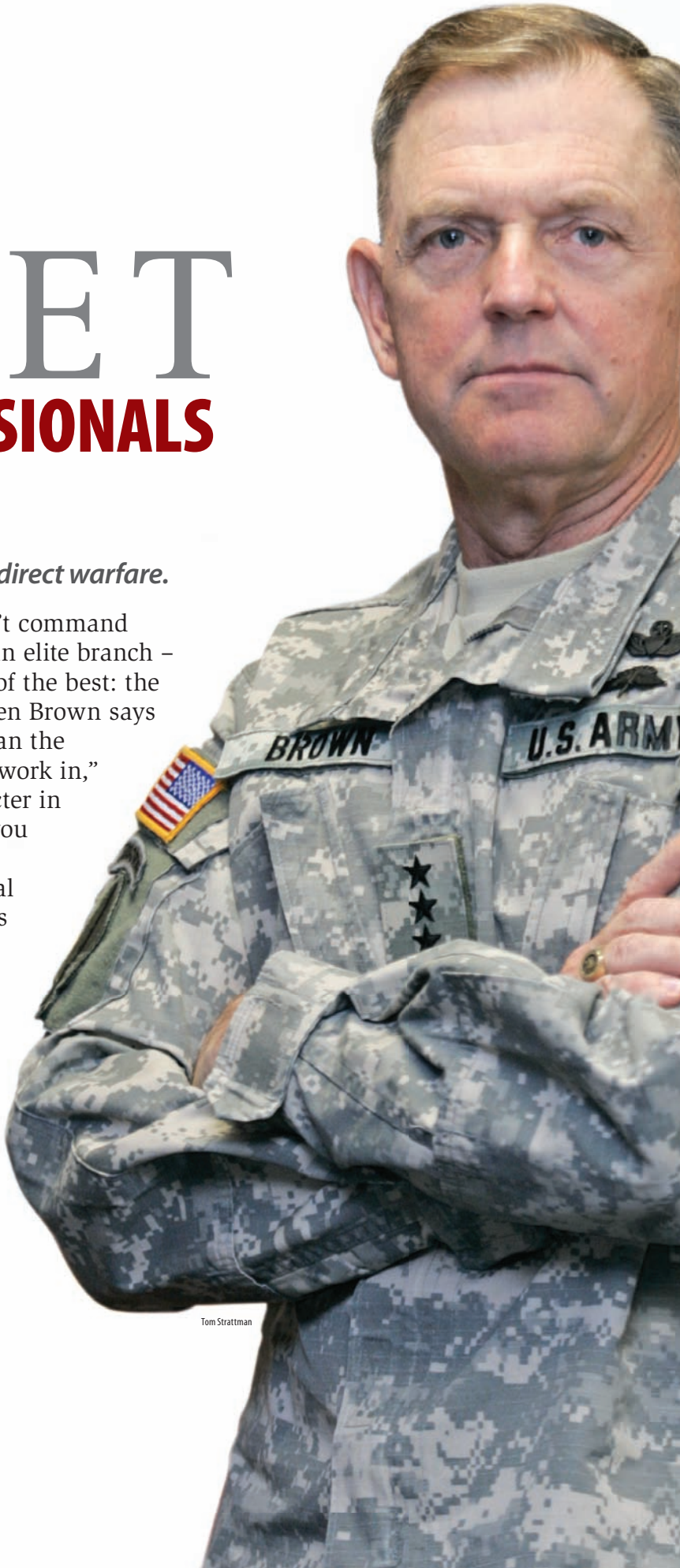
# QUIET PROFESSIONALS

***Leader of elite soldiers stresses indirect warfare.***

Gen. Bryan "Doug" Brown doesn't command typical GIs. He is the leader of an elite branch – the toughest of the tough, the best of the best: the U.S. Special Operations Forces. When Brown says a Navy SEAL has to be "tougher than the environment we are asking him to work in," one recalls Richard Crenna's character in the "Rambo" films saying, "What you choose to call hell, he calls home."

Brown is the quintessential Special Forces soldier, a breed known for its tough airborne training and "Quiet Professionals" moniker. A member of American Legion Post 273 in Madeira Beach, Fla., he is expected to retire this summer after a 40-year career in the U.S. Army that included service in Vietnam, Grenada and Desert Storm. He recently spoke with *The American Legion Magazine* from his office at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, where he is head of U.S. Special Operations Command.




Tom Strattman

*This is a thinking, fighting enemy,*
***and we have to be thinking and fighting faster and harder than he is.***

***The American Legion Magazine:*** *What does Special Operations Command do?*

**Gen. Doug Brown:** Twenty years ago, Congress established a Special Operations Command and gave us what we call "service-like responsibility." In other words, we are responsible for the combat readiness of all special-operations groups. We're responsible for the acquisition of special-operations-unique equipment. We monitor our own people for promotions and schooling for all the special-operations groups. We run our own budgets. We have RDT&E authority – research, training, development and evaluation – meaning that we can acquire equipment systems and vehicles from start to finish as if we were our own military service.

So there are a lot of authorities that Congress invested in this command. The reason Congress gave us this authority goes back to the mission to rescue American hostages held in Iran in 1980 ("Desert One"). The failure at Desert One led a lot of people to question the structure of our special-operations forces. What did they consist of? How are they commanded and controlled? How are they budgeted? How are they taken care of? And so what in fact happened was Congress started some discussions on how to fix special operations in the United States. There was one joint unit stood up at Joint Special Operations Command in Fort Bragg, N.C. But then Grenada took place, and again it was disjointed. It was better – we had a successful operation at Grenada, unlike Desert One – but it still showed the complexities of special-operations forces coming out of all the services without having one specific command and control headquarters, someone to ensure that the funding was balanced and robust.

By 1986, Congress passed the Nunn-Cohen amendment to the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which simply said there will be a Special-Operations Force, it will be commanded by a four-star general, and he will be given certain powers and authorities that will allow us to have a very robust and professional special-operations force. We've had special-operations forces in the services for a long time; the Army Green Berets and the Navy UDTs (underwater demolition teams) are good

examples. But resourcing was spotty, and quite frankly there were times when they were taken down to next to nothing. We did not have the aircraft we needed, the C-130s – the Air Force Special Operations Command to go into Desert One – and so they fixed it. And so here we are 20 years later with a very robust force, a very capable force that quite frankly in the opening days of Operation Enduring Freedom did over 20 missions that were of longer duration and more complex than Desert One.

**Q:** *This command was established during the Cold War. Was more of an emphasis placed on conventional rather than counter-terrorism warfare at the beginning?*
**A:** Absolutely. This isn't a criticism, it's just because of the type of threat we were facing – a nuclear threat, the large Soviet threat and the "close-the-gap" scenario. The emphasis was on conventional forces as opposed to special-operations forces. There was some acknowledgement that this was important. President Kennedy acknowledged this when he gave us our green berets, but quite frankly it never took off with the energy that it needed until Congress passed the Nunn-Cohen amendment.

**Q:** *What is the biggest challenge when fighting an enemy willing to use asymmetrical tactics such as suicide bombers, car bombers and the intentional targeting of civilians?*
**A:** It is very difficult to fight someone with whom you have trouble finding something that he holds dear. You can't sanction al-Qaeda because it isn't a nation. This enemy is not susceptible to the normal ideas that people have about how to hold an enemy at risk. Because of their willingness to use asymmetric means, there is a requirement to figure out different moves as well as using all of those counter-insurgency methods that have proved successful in the past. This is a thinking, fighting enemy, and we have to be thinking and fighting faster and harder than he is.

**Q:** *How do Special Forces A-Teams operate?*
**A:** We have all of the components of Army, Navy, Air Force and now Marines in Special Operations Command. But probably the heart of all Army special operations is the Special Forces A-Team. It's a 12-man team commanded by a captain with one warrant officer and 10 NCOs, and they are culturally trained. They are language qualified. They will not graduate unless they have a language capability. It doesn't matter how well they do, how many push-ups that they do or how tough they are. They will not graduate from the qualification course unless they speak the language. And so they go on a battlefield.

I spent Christmas at an FOB (forward operating base) a couple of years ago that had a Special Forces team on it. They did the wide range of activities. They trained the Afghan national army from a small outpost where they were out there all by themselves not close to any other American supporting forces. They were running a medical clinic for the locals. They had just finished a new school where 135 children were attending. They had made friends and were building a relationship with the people in these three small villages. They went out on patrol every day with the Afghan National Army, providing security from the Taliban forces in the one valley that they were living in. I went out with them and met some of the local Pashtun tribal leaders with whom they had excellent relations.

And so what happens? This one 12-man team that was culturally trained, had the language capability, were experts in not only the indirect side of warfare, but they can do the direct attributes as well, and built these relationships. The local people wanted them to stay. It showed validity in the local government because they started seeing human services provided. It showed education alternatives for their children. It showed medical care and how they can be successful in the future by improving their medical capability. It also showed security because these guys were out on the street ... If you put all that together from one 12-man A-Team, what you have is a small area of stability and security and locals who will tell you where an IED or a weapons cache is because they want you to stay there. And that is how a Special Forces A-Team is highly successful.

**Q:** *How successful have the psychological operations and civil-affairs teams been?*
**A:** While I was up there at this camp there was a PSYOP element and a civil-affairs team. They had broadcast a radio call-in show with a local mayor and were using a small radio transmitter with an antenna on top of a hill. The entire message was being broadcast off an iPod. It was then turned over to the locals so that they could begin broadcasting throughout the country.

The civil affairs guys, I could not say enough about them. They operate in small teams on very dangerous roads. They bring validity to the local

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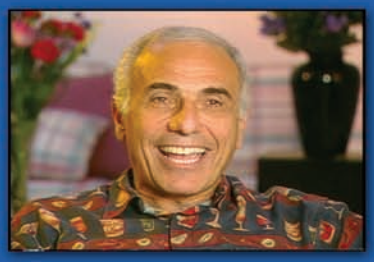

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government. They categorize those infrastructure improvements that are necessary to eliminate human suffering. They build schools. They open medical clinics. They build relationships and, quite frankly, what we think is incredibly important at SOCOM is the indirect form of warfare and the heart of that is our CA and PSYOP. These elements are under our command and control. We are the proponent for psychological operations and civil affairs in the Department of Defense.

**Q:** *Have you seen communities that were initially hostile to U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan turn around and become more welcoming? In other words, are you winning hearts and minds?*
**A:** It depends on where you go. Urban areas are much more difficult, of course. But when you go to where we can do the SOF-type of missions, often in the valleys and rural areas, we do make a lot of friends.

**Q:** *Electrical power seems to be in short supply. How much of a problem does this pose?*
**A:** First of all, you have to have security. Security will allow the infrastructural improvements, which will in turn allow the economies to grow and eventually provide validity to the national and local governments. Once you have that, the whole system starts to work. So I think getting all of those pieces to work together is the biggest challenge.

**Q:** *You mentioned earlier that the Marines had a new role in special operations. How is it different from the old Force Recon?*
**A:** I think there is an appreciation that special-operations forces are critical in the global war on terror. So as we tried to grow special operations, there was this large capability out there that was untapped. The United States Marine Corps, this wonderful force, had no special operations. So at that time, (former Marine Corps Commandant) Gen. Mike Haggee and I got together and crafted a plan to add Marine Corps forces.

They do three things for us. First is the training of foreign military training units. Most of the Marines don't yet have the language skills or cultural awareness, but we've got them deployed around the world today and they are doing very well at training foreign forces. Again, that's the indirect form of military warfare. You train partner nations so that they can eliminate terrorism and protect their own borders. We don't have enough special-forces teams and Navy SEALS teams to do that around the world. So the Marines are going to add to our command.

The second thing they do is they give us a forward base direct action force. Now when a MEU (Marine Expeditionary Unit) sails with a special-operations company onboard, it will be an MEU Special-Operations Force, which we will select, train and equip. These are mostly the old Force Recon guys, who are very capable and very impressive. They will be forward based for crisis response or conduct training missions. They will be a direct-action force that is out around the world.

*Security will allow the infrastructural improvements, which will in turn allow the economies to grow and eventually provide validity to the national and local governments.* ***Once you have that, the whole system starts to work.***

There will be a third element to it. And those are enablers. And those are the things we didn't have that SOCOM will probably need more of. Dog teams, human intelligence, signal intelligence, communications, logistics, support ... three big elements. They will train foreign military units, provide a direct-action force for the Marine Expeditionary Units and enhance the capabilities of the Special Operations Command.

**Q:** *And they will have the resources that they need?*
**A:** I think they will tell you that they are already seeing the impact of that because all of our forces get service-common equipment. If you're a Marine, you get everything the Marine Corps is fielding. Then we will give you the SOF-unique equipment.

So if you're getting an M-4 carbine, we will issue what we call the SOF-mod kit, which is a modification kit that goes on top of your M-4. We don't buy you an M-4. You bring it with you when you come. We just make it better.

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**Q:** *Do the American people understand what the average soldier is facing in this war?*
**A:** I don't think they do. And I think having people like The American Legion help spread the word is important because all of them are veterans who do understand what the soldier, sailor, airman and Marine on the battlefield are going through today. But the op-tempo is pretty high. And the op-tempo on SOCOM forces is even higher. We're managing the biggest sustained deployment in the history of Special Operations Command. We're making sure that the people we're putting on the battlefield have the right skill for the global war on terror, and that took a few changes. The big change down here was when the president signed the unified command plan that said Special Operations Command will be the leader for synchronizing the global war on terror for the Department of Defense. So this headquarters is synchronizing the entire Department of Defense effort for the global war on terror. Before 9/11, we were training, we were organizing, we were equipping. After 9/11, we're training, we're organizing, we're equipping, we're growing, we're deploying, and we're leading the war on terror. It's much different.

**Q:** *Is morale higher because they are Special Operations Forces? A SEAL, for instance, is unlikely to whine or quit after making the cut.*
**A:** The qualification course to get a guy to become a Navy SEAL is legendary, as everyone knows. And the importance is, and maybe I'm off the subject a little bit, is a Navy SEAL has to beat the environment before he can be let in. He has to be tougher than the environment that we're asking him to work in. So some of those environments, especially in the maritime domain, are incredibly difficult. So these are incredible young men that get through it, and they still only graduate about 23 percent of the people that walk in to Basic Underwater Demolition School in Coronado, Calif. So they have worked so hard to get into this course that they are anxious to get out and do the missions that we are asking them to do. And so, while the stress is still there, they are excited about being asked to get out and operate in the battlefield. And quite frankly, I have to put a plug in for the Navy SEALS. They are doing a phenomenal job in Iraq, Afghanistan and all over the world.

**Q:** *What sets SOF training apart from others?*
A: We teach them how to think, not what to think. And so the entire emphasis of special operations training is out-of-the-box thinking. It's selecting the right people, getting through our assessment selection course and then putting them into a training program that allows them to problem solve and make decisions. It is not something on an x-y scale. It is thinking through a problem and solving the problem. And then you give them world-class training, you give them world-class equipment, and you empower them to make decisions on the battlefield. We don't man equipment; we equip the man. It's about the people.

Most people come into special operations thinking it's the physical piece that will fail them. It is the mental piece that will get most of them. I went to a selection course a couple of years ago where I watched them. Seventeen people quit getting off the bus. They just got off and took a look at the selection process that they saw in front of them and said, "We quit." And we said, "The good news is we get to keep you for 48 hours, and you will go back to your unit in a lot better physical condition than when you came here. But then, if you change your mind over the 48 hours, you still don't get to stay – since you already quit, you will go home."

**Q:** *The standards need to be high.*
**A:** That's exactly right. We aren't perfect, but we are out there to get the right people.

**Q:** *You enlisted in the Army in 1967 and are one of the few Vietnam veterans still on active duty. How has your experience in Vietnam influenced your career?*
**A:** Well, I think any time you can get out on the battlefield to see an army at war, especially in that type of environment, it's valuable to the rest of your career, whether it's military or civilian. So I think that although I was a sergeant for three years and didn't deploy to Vietnam until I went to flight school and became an officer, the experience was a good foundation for what I would see the next 37 years of my career.

**Q:** *What do you think is the biggest difference between the Army of the Vietnam era and today's military?*
**A:** The biggest difference is we have an all-volunteer force. I have been on the battlefield many times, and we had great people back in Vietnam, but the Army as a whole today is much better. It's much better trained and equipped. The quality of the troops on the battlefield is just phenomenal. We really, really do have a fine Army.

*Interview: John Raughter*

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# BEING BAXTER BLACK

***America's best-known cowboy poet is deeply rooted in patriotism and respect for the U.S. military.***

**"IT AIN'T EASY TO BE"** both a cowboy and a poet, says Baxter Black, who is one. Cowboys are born, not made, he explains. And poets? "Well," he adds in a leathery drawl, "Poets are poets. 'Nuf said."

Black was born the son of a sailor at Brooklyn Naval Hospital in 1945. He grew up in Las Cruces, N.M., where he was his high school's Future Farmers of America president, school reporter, senior class president and wrestler. He also rode bulls in high-school and college rodeos.

He might have become a naval aviator instead of a veterinarian, had his college math professor not changed a class grade from F to D-minus in what Black says was "a singular moment of poor judgment." Working full-time as an agricultural veterinarian, Black thought the world was his oyster. Then he was laid off, an event that changed his career path and led him back to a love of songwriting – "none that you would have recognized," he admits – and he found himself in occasional demand as a speaker at agribusiness seminars. Not long into his unemployment, he was making public appearances full time.

Today, through stories, songs, books and verse, Baxter Black is America's best-known cowboy poet. National Public Radio has given him a platform to "prattle about cattle and such" since 1988. Black has written more than a dozen books, recorded numerous audio and videotapes and DVDs, and is a popular commentator on more than 130 radio stations and newspapers with his column, "On the Edge of Common Sense."

Black says he is a cowboy and a proud American because "it's hard to be what you aren't." He recently talked with *The American Legion Magazine* about his life and career.

***The American Legion Magazine:*** *How did your career as a veterinarian begin?*

**Baxter Black:** I worked for a pharmaceutical company and was assigned to trouble calls. You know, somebody calls in and says, "Your vaccines killed our cow." I'd go out there and say, "No, they didn't." Simple enough. It was a great job. I traveled extensively beyond my little geographical circle of knowledge. I got to go to the Midwest, the South and to the East – places I'd never been.

I got to see how they raised cows where it rained. It was a big deal. I remember how stunned I was at how everything was so green. I wondered why people mowed their lawns. Why didn't they have cows in there? It didn't make any sense to me. That was a culture shock for me.

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I GIVE YOU THE FLAG THAT BURNED IN THE STREET
IN PROTEST, IN ANGER AND SHAME,
THE VERY SAME FLAG THAT COVERED THE MEN
WHO DIED DEFENDING HER NAME.

WE NOW STAND TOGETHER, AMERICANS ALL,
EITHER BY CHOICE OR BY BIRTH
TO HONOR THE FLAG THAT'S FLOWN ON THE MOON
AND CHANGED THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

HISTORY WILL SHOW THIS FLAG STOOD A FRIEND
TO THE HUNGRY, THE HOMELESS AND LOST
THAT A MIXTURE OF MEN AS COMMON AS CLAY
VALUED ONE THING BEYOND COST.

AND THEY'VE SIGNED IN BLOOD FROM BUNKER HILL
TO SAIGON, KUWAIT, BOSNIA
KABUL, BAGHDAD AND TOKO RI.
I GIVE YOU THE FLAG THAT SAYS TO THE WORLD
EACH MAN HAS A RIGHT TO BE FREE.

**Q:** *How did that lead you to cowboy poetry?*
**A**: I accidentally fell into it. During my stay at the pharmaceutical company, I had been doing speaking, I call it, for lack of a better definition. Sometimes it was semi-educational, but mostly it was entertaining, and I soon found myself in demand. In the short two years I worked for that company, I did more than 200 producer meetings.

Anyway, the phone calls were coming in with requests for me to come to this or that cattle association meeting. The company was thrilled because normally they had to beat people over the head to come and listen about the company stuff. But, thrilled or not, when the company changed hands, being the new guy, they let me go. I thought that was the end of the speaking thing, but even after I was out of a job, the requests kept coming.

I began to charge a little for each speech, and my speaking engagements were getting in the way of my job search. After five years speaking most of the time and looking for a job part of the time, my veterinary license expired. So I guess that was it for the cattle business and veterinary practice.

**Q:** *How did veterinarian friends respond to your decision to leave the field to be an entertainer?*
**A:** What I am, I am not on purpose. I have to make that excuse to my veterinary colleagues all the time. They have forgiven me, and I now attend more veterinary meetings as a speaker than I ever did when I was a veterinarian.

**Q:** *You have a deep respect for the U.S. military and often write about it. Where does that come from?*
**A:** My dad was in the Navy. In 1942 or 1943, Dad graduated from college, and he enlisted as an ensign. I know he spent some time in Guam, because he had a picture of the *Enola Gay* that he took. He died in 1960, and my mom married a World War II Navy veteran 10 years later. He was a quartermaster on a troop ship. My brother Bob was drafted, and he served a tour in Vietnam.

But it's not the fact that members of my family have served. It is something else that drives me. I'm of the Vietnam era. I took ROTC, but I didn't do very well. I ended up a private, so I didn't make any attempt to go on. Those of us my age realize what it was like to literally live at the whim of the draft board.

**Q:** *Are you a veteran?*
**A:** No, but I almost was one. I wasn't doing too well with some of my college classes at the time, so instead of being drafted, I went to the local Navy recruiter in Las Cruces, N.M., who had a booming business in a town where there wasn't any water that came over your knees. I told him I wanted to fly those jets off carriers. I'd done some rodeo bull riding, so I thought I could handle jet fighters. I took the OCS test and a physical and passed both, and the recruiter was ready to sign me up then and there. I wasn't. I wanted to see what my semester grades were going to be like.

I ended up passing the classes, and with one semester left, I applied for veterinary school in Colorado. But I figured I didn't stand a chance, since I had a fistful of math

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classes my last semester. So I went back down to the recruiter and asked if all my paperwork was still good. It wasn't, so I took all his tests and passed them again and told him I'd be back when I got my rejection letter from veterinary school.

To make a long story short, I was accepted to veterinary school on the contingency that I pass all my classes. I promised myself I'd redouble my efforts.

I passed all my classes except math. I pleaded with my math instructor to take mercy on me so I could get into veterinary school. I had scored a 56 on the midterm and failed the final, but in a split second of poor judgment, she gave me a D-minus. I was off to veterinary school.

**Q:** *Any regrets?*
**A:** Regrets? No. But I sometimes wonder what my life would have been like as a Navy pilot. That sure would have been different. But I have to say that I have nothing but respect and admiration for the young men and women who choose a career serving our great country. Those serving now and those who served before them, more than anyone else, are responsible for the freedoms we enjoy. What I do pales in the face of the sacrifices that our military men and women endure to assure the safety and well being of their neighbors, friends and families. God bless them all.

A few years back, I wrote a little piece expressing how I feel lucky to have been born in America, and how the debt I owe comes home to roost every day when I read the names of those soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen who are being killed and wounded in the war on terror. Every one of them is directly responsible for the freedoms I enjoy. Americans from all walks of life have stepped forward to serve, and that I was so blessed to be born here is a miracle I do not take for granted. So many young people have given so much so that I could be right here in Benson, Ariz., and do what I do. For that I am forever thankful to each and every one of them.

**Q:** *Do you feel a connection to the military experience because so many in your family have served?*
**A:** Yes. I don't want anybody thinking that I have even an inkling of what it's like to serve, but I was incensed for my brother and his fellow soldiers who came back from Vietnam and how they were treated when they returned home. Most of us, I'm ashamed to say, stuck our heads in the sand and let it happen. I get upset when people who have not served run around the country and spout off about how bad the war is and belittle our brave military men and women.

It's not about being political. There's a cowboy rule that you "ride for the brand." It is one thing to have issues with President Bush and the war in Iraq, and another to go to Europe and badmouth the war. I don't care if Jacques Chirac thinks our president is a cowboy, but it offends me when someone who is an American spouts off in a foreign country. It undermines what we are trying to do. Willie Nelson is not a big supporter of the war, but you do not hear him running around the world badmouthing the president. It's one thing to spout off among your family but quite another to deride our country across the world, Willie says.

I support people's right to express their opinions. After all, that's what our country is founded on: freedom of expression. But there's a right way and a wrong way, in my opinion.

**Q:** *You often say that America is the world's brightest light. Why?*
**A:** In my lifetime, the United States has become a country like none other on the face of the earth– not because we are the most powerful but because more times than I can count we have reached out to help people in need and people who are oppressed. In doing so, we have sacrificed lives and blood and money. We always seem to beat ourselves up over it, and we question our motives, and our leaders have heated discussions. Yet through it all, America still remains the brightest light in the world for those people who are downtrodden and mistreated.

If America, as a people, had turned our back on the injustices and inhumanity that relentlessly stalk the globe, the world today would be a completely different place. That's why supporting our troops is not an act; it's an act of pride. At least it is for me.

*Interview: James V. Carroll*

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# THE PENTAGON CRISIS OF 2015

## HOW AMERICA JUST MIGHT MICRO-MANAGE ITS WAY TO MILITARY BANKRUPTCY.

BY JAMES JAY CARAFANO

**WASHINGTON, MARCH 28, 2015** – At today's Rose Garden signing of the National Save the Military Act, the flick of a pen fundamentally changed the balance of powers and the conduct of America's national defense. For the first time, a joint Presidential-Congressional Control Board will manage the U.S. Armed Forces, overseeing and approving all Department of Defense decisions.

The unprecedented power-sharing deal granting Congress operational oversight over Pentagon affairs came less than two months after the President's State of the Union admission that the military was "essentially bankrupt."

"The Pentagon's in receivership," one congressional leader declared at the time. "That's something the White House has to accept – and deal with – before we give them another dime."

The new arrangement "will make for interesting times," said one high-ranking Pentagon official attending today's signing ceremony. Rep. Wilson Bramwell, D-N.Y., chair of the House Labor Committee and designated member of the Control Board, already has announced he will hold hearings within three months to determine whether wage-and-hour regulations and civil-service job-security protections should be extended to members of the military.

And Senate Majority Leader Louise Warren, I-S.D., has suggested the upper chamber will soon schedule field hearings to examine the "shocking lack of naval bases" among the Great Plains states.

**Origins of the Crisis.** The Pentagon funding crisis grew out of a "temporary" downturn in defense spending that began shortly after the 2008 elections, as Congress struggled to make good on campaign promises to balance the federal budget. Loathe to restrain spending on the "entitlement" programs that now account for more than half of all federal spending, Congress focused instead on cutbacks in "discretionary funding." Defense is "the big-ticket item of discretionary spending," noted a high-ranking Pentagon official, "and the budget-cutters have gone after us with a vengeance for six years running."

The president's admission that the Pentagon lacked essential funds and matériel to carry out its duties came as a shock to many Americans. "Most of America assumed that the military was being more than adequately funded," said political pollster Evan Shasgreu. "Since the start of the Iraq

Samuel A. Minick

war, Washington and the media kept repeating that defense spending was at the highest level since World War II. The implication was that the Pentagon was flush with cash and had all it needed to keep us well-defended."

"The mantra of 'record-level' defense spending created a false sense of security," observed Wallace Fenton, a national security analyst at the International Defense Institute. "Spending over $400 billion a year on defense sounds impressive, but in terms of GDP – the total of American wealth – it's a fairly modest investment."

In the early days of the republic, the United States spent between 1 percent and 2 percent of GDP annually on defense during peacetime. That changed in the 20th century, when America emerged from World War II a different nation – a bona-fide superpower with global interests and global responsibilities. "When you have a bigger house," one defense analyst pointed out, "you need more insurance."

Over the course of the Cold War, U.S. defense spending averaged over 7 percent of GDP annually. That was unusually high, considering no "hot" war occurred during much of that period. Still, the "extravagant" spending made sense, considering that the United States faced a determined, military superpower. And when the Soviet Union collapsed, most people considered the Cold-War-winning strategy an excellent investment.

After the Cold War, policymakers were unsure what level of defense spending was best. Obviously, no threat equaled that posed by the Soviets. On the other hand, the United States could not go back to spending less than 2 percent of GDP.

Throughout the 1990s, defense spending drifted downward as America cashed a "peace dividend." Defense spending fell below 3 percent of GDP. The Clinton White House sent the military on a procurement "holiday," purchasing almost no new ships, tanks or planes. The Army shrank to its smallest size since World War II. With the advent of a relatively modest military operation in Kosovo, the military was revealed to be threadbare. Readiness levels were declared unacceptable. Military observers warned that inadequate defense spending had taken a dangerous toll.

After 9/11, U.S. forces struggled to meet the requirements of fighting a global war on terror. Soon, what had been evident to defense analysts was apparent to all: Clinton-era spending levels were woefully insufficient to maintain a trained and ready force.

**Prelude to Disaster.** At the height of the U.S. involvement in Iraq, defense spending had risen to almost 4 percent of GDP, largely with the aid of supplemental appropriations approved to fund the war. As soon as U.S. troops began to withdraw from Iraq, however, Congress cut off the supplemental funds.

Following the 2008 elections, long-range defense budgets – already forecast to drop as a percentage of GDP – were cut even further in the "draconian" budget offered by the new president. "I had little choice," the president recalled in this year's State of the Union address. Taxes jumped in the first years of the administration, but that money went to deliver on election-year promises to boost domestic spending.

Within two years, the 2008 tax hikes had slowed economic growth, creating a huge budget deficit. The economy fell into "stagflation," a combination of slow economic growth and high inflation not seen since the 1970s. To the consternation of Washington, the budget shortfall grew bigger, not smaller. No money remained for defense.

Conservative critics said the disaster could have been avoided by keeping taxes low, to stimulate economic growth and rein in the growth of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid – the "Big Three" entitlement programs that accounted for the largest (then only 46 percent) and fastest growing part of the federal budget. "But who would have stood for that?" the president lamented in the State of the Union address.

What the president didn't admit was that Washington had short-changed the Pentagon from the first days of his administration. First, the White House eliminated controversial programs such as missile defense, modernizing the U.S. nuclear arsenal, and space-based defense programs. In jettisoning these strategic programs, the White House scrupulously avoided describing its actions as "defense cuts." Instead, they insisted, the moves were calculated to "save money for the troops on the ground." Still, that wasn't enough to balance the budget, and Pentagon appropriations were pared back further and further each year.

The cutbacks could not have come at a worse time for the Pentagon. The military had never recovered from the equipment purchases forgone during the Clinton era. Most of the new money infused after 9/11 went to pay for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. And that was only part of the problem. The Army, for example, had a $50 billion backlog in fixing and maintaining its equipment before the war. While in Iraq, things only worsened as equipment deteriorated far faster than anticipated. While the military needed more and more money to train forces, modernize equipment and fund fighting operations, it found itself getting less and less.

Observers worldwide soon noticed that the U.S. military had gone hollow. When the United States cut its missile, nuclear and space programs, countries quickly lost their faith in – or fear of – the American nuclear deterrent. Both the Middle East and Northeast Asia saw an opportunity (or, they would say, the need) to bring nuclear chips to regional and international negotiating tables. Several countries raced to build nuclear and space-based weapons.

As U.S. forces withdrew from Iraq, a distinguished military historian noted, "The situation now is analogous to what happened after World War II and Vietnam. Having been 'rode hard,' the U.S. military is being 'put away wet.'"

Today the security of the nation is at risk. "The problem," concluded one senior defense official, "is that missions change faster than force structure ... who knows if we will have time to rebuild before the military is needed again? And of course, it will cost us a fortune. It is a heck of a lot more expensive to rebuild a broken military than it is to maintain a good one."

The situation, many Washington insiders acknowledge, could have been avoided if Congress – even as late as 2008 – had committed to sustaining defense spending at 4 percent of GDP over the long term. That would have provided sufficient resources for the Pentagon, with very little negative effect on the overall economy.

Sustaining "4 Percent for Freedom," however, would have required Congress to address the need for tax reform and redesign the Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid entitlements. Fixing those problems would have kept the economy growing and limited growth in federal spending to sustainable levels. "We know in hindsight that entitlement spending was more than just the major economic challenge of the time," GAO economist Laura Patterson recently observed. "It was, in fact, the major challenge to our national security ... and we failed to see that."

"Such Monday morning quarterbacking is all well and good," the president replied, "but you can't change history."

*James Jay Carafano is a leading expert in defense affairs, military operations and homeland security at The Heritage Foundation.*

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# A Gathering of Eagles

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY JANET ST. JOHN**

Temperatures hovered near freezing on March 17. Groups on both sides of the Iraq war public-opinion spectrum fought the cold to state and defend their positions. On one side, led by antiwar activist Cindy Sheehan, were groups Code Pink and Act Now to Stop War & End Racism, or ANSWER. They planned to march from the Vietnam Memorial to the Pentagon. On the other side was a grassroots group, largely veterans, in Washington because antiwar activists had spray-painted anarchist graffiti onto the steps of the U.S. Capitol during a demonstration earlier this year. The grassroots movement is known as the Gathering of Eagles. Its stated goal: "To stand silent guard over our nation's memorials, in honor of our fallen, and in solidarity with our armed forces in harm's way today."

Both camps assembled in the morning chill at their pre-designated staging areas surrounding the Vietnam War memorials. Those attached to the Gathering of Eagles gave marching orders to newly arriving supporters and members. They were advised where to gather and which monuments and memorials to guard. The antiwar protesters were not as organized. The sheer number of veterans and supporters of the Gathering of Eagles contained them to their zones.

International media covered the antiwar protesters while giving the Gathering of Eagles only passing mention. And in many reports that fol-

TOP: The war protesters' March to the Pentagon begins, but not without the Gathering of Eagles standing to counter the anti-Bush, antiwar cries. Fox News estimated that Eagles outnumbered antiwar demonstrators 3 to 1.
ABOVE: To show their support for U.S. servicemembers deployed in the global war on terrorism, and to stand guard over our nation's monuments and memorials, thousands of veterans and other Americans traveled to Washington from all corners of the United States. Even with temperatures just above freezing, turnout for the Gathering of Eagles was high thanks to word of mouth and promotion throughout the blogosphere.

# A Measure of Closure

***As Washington swirled with Iraq war demonstrations, two Vietnam veterans reconnected 40 years after an ambush neither will ever forget.***

**BY DENNIS McCAFFERTY**

Wearing the Purple Heart on a chain around his neck, Larry Yepez, 58, stood in front of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and warmly greeted his fellow Marines.

"Hey 1-9, I'm 2-9!" he said to one visitor, referring to his time spent serving with the "Hell-in-a-Helmet" guys, the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines.

"Welcome, brother," said the 1-9 visitor, a veteran of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines.

"When were you in Vietnam?" Yepez asked.

"1967," the visitor said.

"Welcome home, brother."

Other such exchanges were voiced by thousands of other veterans who gathered in Washington on March 17 due to protests and counter-protests over the war in Iraq. For Yepez, there was something more to the moment: a long-awaited opportunity to resolve a mystery that had been on his mind for nearly 40 years. He had taken a plane from his home of Lathrop, Calif., then a train from Albany, N.Y., to see Jack "Doc" Fitzgerald, a corpsman from his platoon in Vietnam. Yepez was almost certain that Fitzgerald saved his hand – perhaps even his life – on July 29, 1967, when both men were caught in a horrific ambush during Operation Kingfisher, an attempt to launch missions in the Vietnamese Demilitarized Zone.

"I can't wait to see him and talk to him about what happened," Yepez said at

Hundreds of Americans wave flags in a back view of the Gathering of Eagles staging area at Constitution Gardens in Washington.

lowed the day's demonstrations, the protesters were referred to as "antiwar" while the Gathering of Eagles was labeled "pro-war." And while the antiwar protest was well-funded and promoted by George Soros – benefactor of MoveOn.org, along with Hollywood celebrities and antiwar politicians – the Gathering of Eagles was self-funded and self-promoted through the Internet, by word of mouth, and across the blogosphere. Media estimates of war-protester numbers were typically exaggerated in the media, while the number of those participating in the Gathering of Eagles received scant attention. Fox News reported that the Gathering of Eagles outnumbered antiwar demonstrators at least 3-1.

Veterans who assembled at the Vietnam Wall fell into two camps: those who support ending the Iraq War and those who support nothing less than victory in Iraq, honor for those who have fallen, and protection of monuments. The high turnout for the Gathering of Eagles was unexpected by antiwar demonstrators, who had estimated they would attract 100,000 or more to their march. Cold weather was blamed for holding the antiwar group's attendance to about 10,000.

Thousands of veterans, meanwhile, traveled from all over the country – many by motorcycle – to show their support for U.S. troops fighting in the war on terrorism and to prevent damage to monuments and memorials. The antiwar march was supposed to follow the same path traveled by Vietnam War protesters 40 years ago: across the Potomac via the Memorial Bridge, past Arlington Cemetery, ending at the Pentagon. This time, however, the march was not dominated by one opinion. On the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial, and lining the street to the Memorial Bridge, counter-protesters waved signs in support of President Bush, U.S. soldiers and their mission.

0800 on March 17, when the two were supposed to meet at the memorial. However, as Fitzgerald was heading to Washington from his home in Pittston, Maine, his bus was delayed by a severe late-winter snowstorm. Yepez waited. The hours passed. By afternoon, it wasn't looking good, so he began walking away from the memorial toward where the demonstration activity was picking up.

At the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, he paused for a moment. He heard a voice.

"Larry, is that you?"

"Doc?" Yepez responded.

They embraced immediately, Yepez in his Marine flat hat and Fitzgerald wearing his Purple Heart, Marine utility shirt and cover cap. They quickly caught up on the lives they've led since the war and soon got down to the business of Yepez' question – what exactly had happened that day during Operation Kingfisher? Piecing together the chronology, both concluded that Fitzgerald indeed was the first responder to tend to Yepez and his wound. "The bullet ripped through my canteen and then through my wrist," Yepez said, revealing the scars.

Larry Yepez shows scars from the wound that would have cost him his life if not for Navy Corpsman Jack Fitzgerald.

They reflected upon the kind of men they were then, and how the war shaped who they became. Yepez joined the Marines after high-school graduation only because five of his closest high-school buddies were planning to do the same thing, but none of them could convince their parents to sign release forms.

"My dad was willing, though," Yepez says. "I was the only one who showed up. Next thing I know, I'm heading to Vietnam."

During Kingfisher, he and his company approached the Ben Hai River in North Vietnam. That's when the ambush erupted. "We were ordered to run up to the top of the hill to get to the squad," he says. "It was mountain jungle country, and many of our guys were getting wounded with punji sticks as we were getting out of there."

As a grenade launcher, Yepez rushed

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"How did you get the flag in here?" a Rolling Thunder member asks another Gathering participant. Security remained tight at the Vietnam Wall most of the morning, but U.S. Flags became more prevalent as thousands filled the area to counter antiwar demonstrators.

Voices shouted out "USA! USA!" to counter "Impeachment!" and "Out of Iraq Now!" Antiwar demonstrators carried pre-printed signs, posters of Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara and an effigy demonizing President Bush. Several protesters carried coffins with images of soldiers on them. The last of the antiwar marchers began crossing the Potomac 30 minutes after the official start, but between the morning rally and the Pentagon arrival, protester numbers dropped drastically. Only about 1,000 diehards finished the 2.8-mile hike. Other than some name-calling and a few skirmishes with police, the protest and counter-protest went off without altercation. It was over before 4 p.m.

The day after I attended the events, I was dismayed to see the national media portrayal. The Gathering of Eagles was treated like a group of thugs in biker jackets who came to tear up peace signs.

Media correspondents interview Americans at the Gathering of Eagles. Most networks inflated the antiwar movement's turnout.

That is not what I observed, nor was it what happened that day. Rather, I witnessed several thousand proud men and women honoring the memory of all the soldiers lost and injured in service to our country.

I spoke at length with many veterans who were later mischaracterized as "pro-war" when in fact they know well the price of peace. They understand Thomas Jefferson's quote, "The tree of liberty must be watered with the blood of patriots and tyrants."

I observed from all the veterans in attendance absolute dedication to our men and women in uniform. I observed unabashed patriotism. It's too bad other media didn't pick up on it. It was something to see.

*Janet St. John is a Washington-area photographer.*

wounded men to the chopper-landing site. But he took fire and hit the ground hard. "I saw a billowing, white cloud and I knew that I was already dead and was going to heaven," he says. "That's when a hand appeared in that white cloud and grabbed me, pulling me out of there."

That night, both Yepez and Fitzgerald were pinned by the enemy during a long wait. From the jungle, the VC warned: "Marines, you die. You die tonight, Marines." According to a published history of the incident, 23 Marines died and 251 others were wounded during Kingfisher. Thanks to protective shelling from U.S. air strikes, many were able to hold on. The morning after the ambush, Yepez was on the last chopper out. He never knew that Fitzgerald, who suffered multiple wounds during the ordeal, made it out on that same chopper.

As it was, doctors told Yepez he'd never be able to use his hand effectively. But he worked hard on his rehab and eventually gained full use of it. He went on to fight wildfires for more than 20 years for the National Park Service before retiring in 2002. Then, last November, he caught up with his former squad leader.

"Who made it out that day?" Yepez wanted to know. The former squad leader rattled off a list of names, including "Fitzgerald." Yepez found Fitzgerald's phone number, called, and made plans to meet him in Washington. "It's good to sit down and go over all the details," says Fitzgerald, 58, who became a mental-health nurse and social worker after the war. "It helps us reinforce in our minds what we went through. And we're pretty sure now it was me who treated his injury that day."

The storm reduced their time together to only a few hours that day. Fitzgerald was back on the bus heading toward Maine that night. Before the men parted, they shared a meal at a Vietnamese restaurant in Washington. They promised to stay in touch.

"I am overwhelmed to see him again," Yepez said, Fitzgerald by his side. "I can't tell you how much it means to talk to someone who knows the story of what happened that day. It is going to help me so much with the healing process."

*Dennis McCafferty is a senior writer for* USA WEEKEND *and other publications.*

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[VERBATIM]

*"In the face of the administration's stubborn unwillingness to change course, the Senate has no choice but to force a change of course."*

**Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass.,** co-sponsor of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's proposal to cut off funding for the Iraq war if President Bush were to reject a deadline for ending combat

*"It's time the self-appointed strategists on Capitol Hill understood a very simple concept: you cannot win a war if you tell the enemy you're going to quit."*

**Vice President Dick Cheney**

*"I was responsible for the 9/11 operation from A to Z."*

**Khalid Sheikh Mohammed,** al-Qaeda's No. 3, confessing to a U.S. military tribunal that he planned and supported 31 terrorist attacks, including 9/11

*"A year ago, my approval rating was in the 30s, my nominee for the Supreme Court had just withdrawn, and my vice president had shot someone. Ah, those were the good ol' days."*

**President George W. Bush,** joking at a Radio and Television Correspondents' Association dinner

*"It's 100-percent voluntary, so if the passenger doesn't feel comfortable with it, the passenger doesn't have to go through it."*

**Transportation Security Administration spokesman Nico Melendez,** on airport screenings that use new X-ray technology that can see through clothing

*"The real blame should be directed at us, the leaders of the Arab nation."*

**Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah,** criticizing Arab leaders for infighting and divisions that he says contribute to Mideast turmoil

[D-DAY ANNIVERSARY]

# Conversation across history

## *Airborne soldiers from wars separated by six decades find common ground.*

*Every spring, U.S. veterans return to the countryside of northwestern France, where as soldiers on June 6, 1944, they changed the course of human history. At private homes and in public places throughout the anniversary week, they gather to remember the invasion that spelled the beginning of the end for Adolf Hitler. Activities include celebrations, parades, re-enactments and solemn visits to the Normandy American Cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach.*

*On June 2, 2006, connections were made across generations when 82-year-old Ralph Manley of Springfield, Mo., a veteran of the 101st Airborne Division who jumped on D-Day, found himself in the company of two 21st-century Screaming Eagles – Staff Sgt. Thomas Brutscher, 30, of Louisville, Ky., and Spec. Chris Van Schooneveld, 21, of Eden Prairie, Minn. – who had been granted leave from Iraq after receiving, respectively, the 101st Airborne Division's Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year and Soldier of the Year honors. They shared a few minutes with* The American Legion Magazine *at a 15th-century manor not far from the Merderet River.*

***Do you find similarities between yourselves and those who fought in Europe during World War II?***

**TB:** I do in a way. Soldiers in Iraq are going through some tough times, in the line of fire every day … living on the edge. It's not on the same scale in terms of numbers, but it's happening.

**CV:** We're there to help people who have been oppressed by a dictator. Hitler was a dictator. Saddam Hussein was a dictator. We didn't know about the concentration camps of World War II until we got there. In Iraq, we didn't know about all the torturing and execution that went on until we got there. Now it's exposed.

***What are some differences?***

**CV:** The insurgency. People still live in fear of Saddam in Iraq. Many of them could help us more, but they won't because they still have that fear.

***How well connected do you feel to veterans of the 101st?***

**TB:** There's so much history to the 101st … it's overwhelming. I actually got to the unit about a year ago and started cracking the books, reading about the battle for Carentan and Ste. Mere-Eglise, and there is just so much pride in the unit. You sense it at work. On post, at Fort Campbell, people are proud to be in this unit. D-Day is a big part of that.

***Does that legacy inspire you?***

**TB:** I'm in the military for the long haul. I've already decided that's my

[ACTIVE DUTY]

Last year, syndicated columnist and Iraq war veteran Col. Austin Bay compiled a list of contemporary military phrases and acronyms in a short volume titled, "Embrace the Suck: A Pocket Guide to Milspeak." Here are some of the less salty entries:

**Ali Baba** Slang for enemy forces. Originated in the first Gulf War but can mean a terrorist or enemy in the CENTCOM area. See *haji*.

**badgeless wonder** Refers to someone who doesn't have a security badge and must therefore be escorted around the classified area for an entire work shift. This ticks off the soldier assigned to escort duty.

**back to the taxpayers** Navy slang for where a wrecked aircraft gets sent.

Jeff Stoffer

career. I just signed up for six more years. Even when I get out, I will still be a soldier and pass the history along to others that come after us, so they realize the history ... I'll tell them about people like Ralph Manley here.

**RM:** The greatest legacy we older soldiers can ever have is to see young, well-educated soldiers like these carry on the tradition. It makes me so proud and relieved to know that they can carry on ... maintaining peace and freedom for more people than ever before in the history of man.

***What are some of your memories of D-Day and the European campaign?***

**RM:** I went into the airborne because it paid $50 a month more, and you got to wear fancy boots. Young people think they're invincible. I was 19 when I joined, 20 on D-Day. I landed near Carentan, France.

I was wounded six times. The wonder drugs of that day were penicillin and sulfa powder. You just dig out the shrapnel, put some sulfa powder in it, bandage it, and go on. You had a mission to accomplish.

***How do you honor the memory of D-Day when you return to France?***

**RM:** I still jump. Jumping near Carentan this year. I'm in perfect health.

***How did the war affect you?***

**RM:** It shaped my whole life. I don't have a bad day. All my days are good. Some are just better than others. I am thankful for each hour, each day, each month, each year because of the opportunities America offers. I'm happy for the opportunity to have served my country. It did not make me bitter about life. It made me better about life. And I have a deep appreciation for the talents of every soldier, every airman, everyone who serves our great country in uniform.

*– Jeff Stoffer*

[*THE FLAG*]

**Fringe elements**

Gold fringe is not considered an unauthorized addition to the U.S. Flag's design, merely honorable enrichment. Records indicate fringe was first used on the flag as early as 1835, though it was not until 1895 that it was officially added to the national flag for all Army regiments.

www.ushistory.org

[*LEGION RIDERS*]

**Tennessee hosts first national gathering**

American Legion Riders will roll into Nashville, Tenn., July 5-8 for the first National Romp. The event takes place at American Legion Post 88.

Activities include music, tours, contests, trophies and a timed ride through Music City.

Post 88 offers meals, entertainment and five acres of free camping. Ten hotels are within 10 minutes walk.

**Registration information**

***www.post88riders.com***

***hwg@greersystems.com***

**Bombacolada** Slang for LSA Anaconda, a major supply base near Balad, Iraq. Balad is also called "Mortaritaville" because it is frequently hit by rocket and mortar attacks.

**CHU** (Containerized Housing Unit) Pronounced "choo." These are the global war on terrorism's Quonset huts. Essentially, they are mobile homes about the size of a standard shipping container. A CHU is usually divided into two or three rooms. The containers are vented and have power outlets, and most can be fitted with an air conditioner.

**dome of obedience** Slang for a military helmet. Also called "brain bucket" or "skid lid."

**embrace the suck** Phrase heard in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Translation: The situation is bad, but deal with it.

**Gatorade run** A patrol specifically intended to make positive political contact with the locals. It may render medical aid and provide food. The goal: to win hearts and minds, etc.

**good idea fairy** Someone, often anonymous, who generates changes to the plan at the last moment.

Noel St. John

[STATEMENT]

*"This issue is about American men and women who we sent to war, and now some want to pull back before they finish their job. The time to debate the war is not in the funding bill that keeps our troops alive. If they need funds, it is the responsibility of Congress to provide them the money so that they can accomplish their mission."*

**The American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin and Veterans of Foreign Wars National Commander Gary Kurpius,** in an April 12 joint statement to Congress opposing a timeline for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq as a condition for supplemental wartime defense funding

[BOY SCOUTS]

## Scout Jamboree claims victory in court

The U.S. Seventh District Court of Appeals in Chicago overturned an injunction to separate the U.S. Department of Defense from the National Boy Scout Jamboree held every four years at Fort A.P. Hill near Fredericksburg, Va.

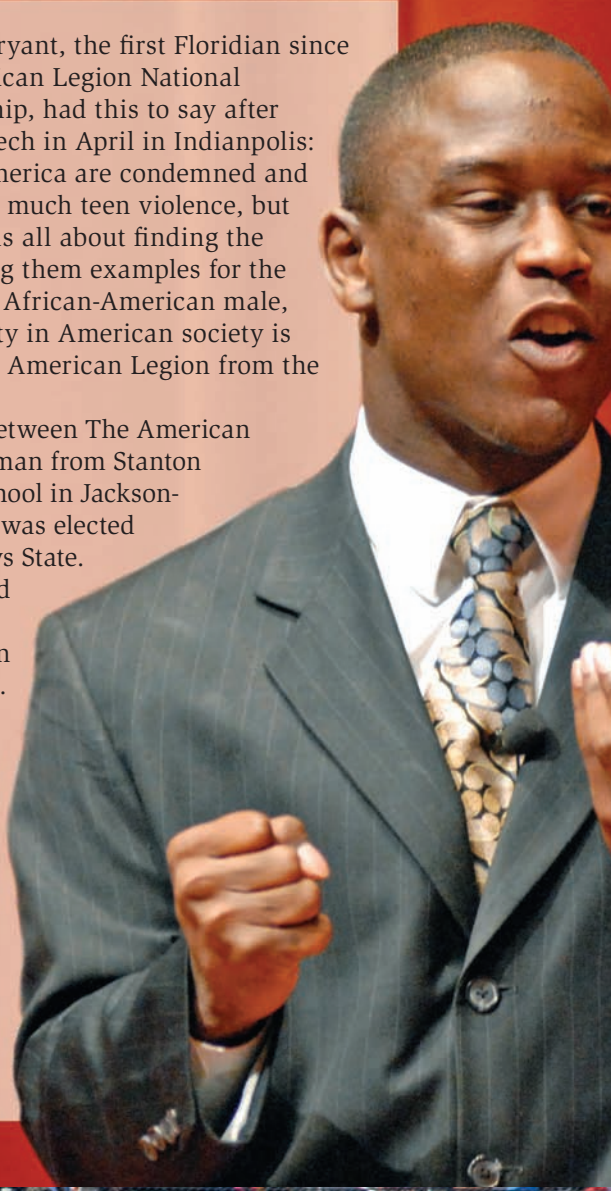
"This is a victory for not only the youth of our nation but also for the preservation of tradition and common sense," said American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin.

In 1999, the ACLU sued DoD over its support for the Jamboree. In 2005, a federal district court in Chicago concluded the Jamboree statute was unconstitutional under the establishment clause because Scouting includes "duty to God" in its oath.

The American Legion filed a "friend of the court" brief supporting DoD in its successful appeal.

[AMERICANISM]

## National Oratorical champion expresses gratitude to Legion



Co' Relous Candal Bryant, the first Floridian since 1978 to win The American Legion National Oratorical Championship, had this to say after delivering his title speech in April in Indianpolis: "Often the youth of America are condemned and judged, and there is so much teen violence, but The American Legion is all about finding the good youth and making them examples for the rest of America. As an African-American male, to have this opportunity in American society is humbling. I thank The American Legion from the bottom of my heart."

It's been a big year between The American Legion and the young man from Stanton College Preparatory School in Jacksonville, Fla. Last year, he was elected governor of Florida Boys State. On April 15, he received $18,000 in scholarship money by taking first in the national oratoricals.

Ashley Lauren Butman of Cumming, Ga., earned a $16,000 scholarship for second place.

Jared Carson Canfield, a junior from Naperville, Ill., placed third and took home a $14,000 college scholarship.

[AMERICAN LEGION RACING]

*"As soon as the green flag waved, I knew we had a problem. The engine kept sputtering and finally some wiring inside the car started smoking. The car handled well during practice and qualification, and we thought we might have a pretty good day. We've got a car that can do well if we can keep it running until the end of the race. It might not seem like it to folks right now, but we are getting better and our equipment is getting better."*

**Jerick Johnson,** driver of The American Legion 76 Freedom Car, which qualified 42nd and finished 41st after an electrical problem ended his April 7 Busch Series race at Nashville Superspeedway just 10 laps in. The race team earned $13,375.

James V. Carroll

## 'Power in the hands of the people'

*An excerpt from the first-place oration performed by Co' Relous Bryant at the 70th annual American Legion National High School Oratorical Championship in April:*

Imagine with me. It's dark. Raining. You are 7 years old. It's a small African country. You are awakened by this immense pain. It's 3 a.m. You get up from your pallet on the ground, and you run to your mother. "Mommy, mommy!" you exclaim. "My stomach really hurts."

She looks at you, and with a pain in her eyes, she tells you to go back to sleep. You plead with her and try every way you can to convince her that there is something terribly wrong. She looks at you again, and as a tear swells in her eye, she tells you to go back to sleep. You, confounded and bewildered, walk back to your sleeping area on the ground. You close your eyes, and you never open them again.

There are millions of stories like that about little African children suffering from sleeping sickness and dying from disease every day. Typically, when an American hears this story they are expected to feel grief and depressed, and form pity for the situation. I challenge you here today that when you hear a story like this one that you will examine your own country and be proud of the benefits and privileges that your country affords you. Look into the eyes of America and find out what works. Pity never accomplished anything, yet if you take the pride and example that your country gives you, and apply it to the other areas that aren't as privileged, America works. She got it right. So now we just need to examine what works.

John Winthrop described America as a "city on a hill." He meant that we are positioned up on a mountain, and we allow our light to cast out and illuminate the rest of the world. The source and power behind that light is the Constitution. It puts the power in the hands of the people ...

*A video of Co' Relous Candal Bryant's entire winning speech is available online.*
***www.legion.org/vision/currentevents/public_relations***

James V. Carroll

[*PUBLIC RELATIONS*]

## *Nashville TV station honored*

Nashville News Channel 5 (WTVF-TV) investigative reporter Jennifer Kraus uncovered life-threatening neglect at two Tennessee state veterans homes in a series that led to a state probe, the governor's intervention and new care practices at both facilities.

"Journalism doesn't get any better than that," American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin said, announcing that Channel 5 will receive the coveted Fourth Estate Award. "Your reports directly led to correction of life-threatening violations that likely saved the lives of veterans under their care."

Kraus will accept the award during the 89th American Legion National Convention in Reno on Aug. 30.

### Things Soldiers Say

**haji** Slang for an Iraqi, but may mean any Middle Easterner who hails from a predominantly Muslim country.

**In God we Trust (all others will sign hand receipts)** A sign commonly found on the wall or door of well-run supply rooms and arms rooms. Soldiers must sign a hand receipt for their weapons.

**Groundhog day** Every day of your tour in Iraq. Term suggests the days never change – always long and hot, and the same events keep recurring. From the Bill Murray movie "Groundhog Day."

[GALLERY]

# Living Memorial Sculpture Garden

## *'A place to remember, a place to mend'*

LindaSue Runnels

U.S. Marine Corps veteran Dennis Smith's giant metal sculptures honoring those who have served during war or peace are symbolic, intimate, patriotic and moving. His work can be found at the 132-acre Living Memorial Sculpture Garden, Hot LZ Memorial Wall and Meditation Labyrinth on U.S. Forest Service land along California Highway 97 nine miles north of Weed, Calif.

Founded in 1988 by a group of veterans and supported by the Weed/Lake Shastina Kiwanis Club, the poignant roadside attraction includes 10 larger-than-life metal sculptures, including The Peaceful Warrior, The Greatest Generation, Those Left Behind, POW/MIA, Coming Home, The Nurses (below), The Why Group, The Flute Player, the Korean War Veteran Monument, and WIA.

***http://livingmemorialsculpturegarden.org***

Marilyn McDonald

[LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION]

**POST 18, CAMERON, W.Va.** What began as a personal project for Paul Stern – making free hand-crafted flag cases for families of those killed in recent military conflicts – has grown fast after national media attention from CNN and "The Today Show." Stern received donations of money, glass and a lifetime supply of lumber. He has put it all to good use, sending 360 flag cases to families in 48 states. Each display case takes about four hours to build, and he has about 140 orders pending. "I'll keep doing it as long as funds and supplies are there," Stern says. "Right now, it's the shipping costs that are killing me." For more information or to request a flag case, visit **www.wvflagcases.com** on the Web.

**E-MAILS FROM AFGHANISTAN:**

# 'BLESSED TO BE AN AMERICAN'

*Following is the second in a series of excerpts from e-mails sent home by Army Capt. Adam Bock, a helicopter pilot serving in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.*

In my last e-mail, I mentioned the overwhelming beauty of the mountains here. The best comparison that I can think of ... I remember being in O'Ray, Colo., for Christmas a few years back ... Telluride. Those mountains, which I believe are called the "San Juan" mountains, had the most distinctive peaks and ridgelines that I have ever seen. Those are the same mountains I get to see every morning as I head to work. From the front porch of my wood hut I get to watch the sun rise over astounding peaks that chisel into the heavens, and it takes my breath away just to be here.

I know my time away from all of you is worthwhile and honorable. We are making a difference in the lives of people who have neither the strength nor means to stand up for themselves. They are a primitive culture, compared to our lifestyle ... merely surviving. From what I have witnessed, I feel blessed to be an American. I will never take it for granted.

*– Adam*

## THINGS SOLDIERS SAY

**Johnny Jihad** Slang for a Muslim or Muslim combatant.

**powerpoint Ranger** Usually refers to an Army captain or major whose primary mission on a staff is to create Microsoft PowerPoint presentations.

**Mookie** Nickname for Iraqi Shia leader Moqtada al Sadr.

**oxygen thief** A worthless person.

**Marlboroland** Slang for Iraq's Anbar province, which is largely patrolled by U.S. Marines.

**road toad** A soldier assigned to road guard duty. A thankless job. In Iraq it usually involves eating a lot of dust.

# AS HEARD ON PAUL HARVEY NEWS
# THE BEST AIR PURIFIER EVER
# Works 4 Ways to Attack Pollution from Air, Surfaces and Fabrics

## Works to eliminate odors, dust, smoke, pollen, germs, mold, bacteria, viruses, pet dander, dust mites and much more

### Will eliminate the most noticeable indoor air pollutants in just 15 minutes
### Provides relief from allergies and sinus

**By John Whitehead, Media Services**

BioTech Research has announced EdenPURE™, the ultimate air purifier.

The EdenPURE™ is the best and most advanced air purifier on the market.

It runs super quiet and requires no filter replacement.

Unlike typical air purifiers which have only 1 or 2 mechanisms of eliminating pollution, the EdenPURE™ has 4 mechanisms which eliminate pollution.

There many different types of pollution and many of them, especially the worst, cannot be eliminated with the limited mechanisms of old-style air purifiers. The EdenPURE™ 4-mechanism system destroys all of the types of pollution.

The remarkable EdenPURE™ not only eliminates pollution from the air, but also eliminates pollution embedded in walls, ceilings, floors, carpets, furniture, clothing, and on countertops and other surfaces. It sanitizes everything in the house. The majority of air pollution comes from contaminated surfaces and fabrics.

The EdenPURE™ relieves allergies, asthma, respiratory problems, provides better sleep, more energy, and better health.

The air purification technology in the EdenPURE™ is that used by the federal government to purify air in the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station.

Old style HEPA filters mainly only remove dust and some allergens. They do not remove the most harmful pollutants such as bacteria, viruses, mold and yeast.

And if you have one of those air purifiers that has no fan, beware. More will be explained on this as you read on.

The EdenPURE™ has a super advanced fan that runs so quiet that you would have to put your ear up next to it to know that it's even running. And the EdenPURE™ is virtually maintenance free.

For more on the new EdenPURE™, here is my remarkable interview with John Whitakre, Chief of Research and Development for BioTech Research.

**Q. BioTech Research has been in the air purification business for a long time and your previous air purifier model is an all-time best seller and was super effective. Why is the new EdenPURE™ air purifier so much better?**

A. Yes, our previous model was an all-time best seller and in our opinion was the best air purifier on the market, which was also the opinion of our customers.

But the EdenPURE™ is much more advanced. Our previous model used 2 very effective mechanisms to eliminate pollution, which were combinations of activated oxygen and ultraviolet light.

The EdenPURE™ utilizes 4 much more advanced electronic air purification mechanisms.

The advanced technology in the EdenPURE™ is that used in spacecrafts such as the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station.

**Q. What about those air purifiers that have no fan?**

A. It has been well documented in scientific tests that an air purifier without a fan cannot possibly remove pollution to any substantial level. Those types mainly remove pollution that is very close to the unit. That's fine if you're purifying the air in a broom closet, but not for a wide area. Also those units have you wiping off a plate to clean off the trapped pollution. But unless those units have ultraviolet light, that plate contains live bacteria and viruses that can be harmful.

**Q. How does the EdenPURE™ eliminate pollution without requiring the air to go through the unit, and how does it eliminate pollution on surfaces and fabrics?**

A. The EdenPURE™ has 4 electronic mechanisms of eliminating pollution that mimic the way it is done by nature's thunderstorm. Thunderstorms produce highly activated oxygen which destroys pollution and puts negative ions in the air that also destroy pollution and also promote better health. This super activated oxygen produced by thunderstorms is the most devastating to pollution and it is also the source of that aroma that you smell after a thunderstorm that people associate with super fresh air.

Three of the 4 electronic mechanisms in the EdenPURE™ go out and seek out pollution throughout the room, on surfaces, and in fabrics like guided missiles. The pollution cannot hide. These guided missiles also kill bacteria, viruses, yeast and mold.

The EdenPURE™ eliminates all pollution. Amongst the hundreds of pollutants EdenPURE™ eliminates besides bacteria, viruses, mold, yeast and allergens are: fungus, formaldehyde, fecal odors, perfumes, cologne, creosote from fireplaces, methylene chloride, phenols, PCB's, humic acid, DIMP's, glycerols, kepones, methyl ethyl keytones, acetone from fingernail filings, styrene, nitro compounds, formic acid, benzonic, butanes, ethanes, pentanes, propanes, methanes, alcohols, cyanides, detergents, phosphates and many more too numerous to mention.

**Q. Does the EdenPURE™ require filter replacement like the old-style HEPA air purifiers?**

A. No. There is a small 4 inch by 8 inch pre-filter that you simply clean periodically by running water over it. This pre-filter is made of highly durable mesh that will last a lifetime.

**Q. So then the EdenPURE™ sanitizes everything in the house?**

A. Yes. It sanitizes the air, walls, floors, ceiling, furniture, carpeting, countertop surfaces, sinks, bathtubs, toilets, and even sanitizes your clothes.

**Q. How well does the EdenPURE™ work on eliminating odors?**

A. The EdenPURE™ will eliminate all odors. It eliminates odors from cigarette smoke, urine, mildew, cooking odors, and any other odors in your home. The EdenPURE™ odor elimination is so powerful that it will eliminate the odor of a skunk in minutes.

After eliminating the odor from the air, the EdenPURE™ then goes to the source of the odor. It eliminates embedded urine in carpet, and cigarette smoke that is embedded in carpet, furniture, wallpaper, and clothing. It also destroys mold and yeast.

The EdenPURE™ Whole House Model purifies air in an area up to 3,000 sq. ft.

The EdenPURE™ Area Model purifies air in an area up to 1,000 sq. ft.

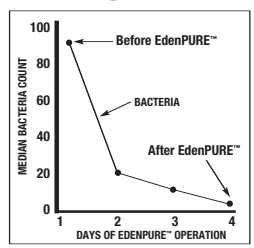
**End of interview.**

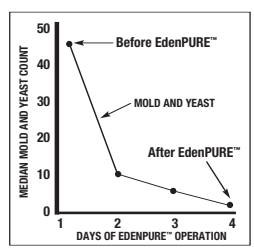
For readers who want to obtain the EdenPURE™ at this 10 day sale price please see the Special Readers Discount Coupon on this page. Those readers ordering after 10 days from the date of this publication must pay regular price.

## EdenPURE™ - Never breathe bad air again

The EdenPURE™ Whole House Model

## Independent Test Results




**EdenPURE™ eliminates most pollution in 15 minutes. Bacteria, mold and yeast are among the most difficult pollutants to eliminate. Old style air purifiers never eliminated them. The EdenPURE™ eliminated virtually all the bacteria, mold and yeast in only 24 hours. This independent laboratory test was conducted by Dr. Dee M. Graham, one of the leading air pollution experts in the world.**

The EdenPURE™ Area Model

## Testimonies of a few of the many EdenPURE™ satisfied customers

**The EdenPURE™ is the most remarkable product that I have tried in years. All of the claims hold true. Not only did it eliminate the dust in my house, I have not had a sinus headache or scratchy throat since I began using it. The whole house smells fresh and clean. You would never be able to tell that I have two dogs and a cat. It is also nice not to have to bother changing filters. You just plug it in, turn it on and forget about it. It is truly refreshing to use a product that does everything that it is supposed to do and more.** ***Michelle Goldsmith***

**Before using the EdenPURE™ I had to take antihistamines and use allergy/sinus nasal spray. I was embarrassed because my eyes were red and I always sounded like I had a cold. I then got the EdenPURE™. I plugged in the EdenPURE™ and went about my daily duties when I suddenly noticed I wasn't coughing or wheezing or clearing my throat. This was incredible. The EdenPURE™ really works! I am so happy. My eyes are clear and I can breath. I've tried many other air purifiers, they're all in my storage room with other failed products. The EdenPURE™ truly does what it claims to do.** ***Diane C. Vance***

## SPECIAL READER'S DISCOUNT COUPON

The price of the EdenPURE™ Whole House Model, which purifies air up to 3,000 sq.ft. is $372 plus $22 shipping for a total of $394 delivered. The price of the EdenPURE™ Area Model, which purifies air up to 1,000 sq. ft., is $302 plus $12 shipping for a total of $314 delivered. People reading this publication get a $75 discount, free shipping and handling and pay only $297 for the Whole House Model delivered and only $227 for the Area Model delivered if you order within 10 days. They come in the decorator color of grey which goes with any decor. There is a strict limit of 3 units at the discount price - no exceptions please.

- To order by phone, call TOLL FREE **1-800-299-7557 Ext. EPA1665**. Place your order by using your credit card. Operators are on duty 24 hours, 7 days.
- To order online, log on to www.biotechresearch.com
- To order by mail, by check or credit card, fill out and mail in this coupon.

This product carries a 60-day satisfaction guarantee. If you are not totally satisfied, your purchase price will be refunded. No questions asked. There is also a one year warranty.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

Number of Whole House units you want: ____ Number of Area Model units you want: ____

Check below to get discount:

☐ I am ordering within 10 days of the date of this publication, therefore I get a $75 discount, free shipping and handling and my price is only $297 for the Whole House Model delivered and $227 for the Area Model delivered.

☐ I am ordering past 10 days of the date of this publication, therefore I pay full price of $394 for the Whole House Model and $314 for the Area Model.

Enclosed is $_____ in: ☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Money Order

(Make check payable to BioTech Research)

or charge my: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Am. Exp./Optima ☐ Discover/Novus

Account No. _____ Exp. Date ____/____ Signature _____

**MAIL TO:** BioTech Research Dept. EPA1665, 7800 Whipple Ave. N.W., Canton, OH 44767

[FINANCE]

# Portfolios of terror

***Group leads campaign to divest U.S. pension funds from rogue nations.***

The Center for Security Policy (CSP) is leading a national effort to convince large public pension funds to jettison investments in firms that do business with terrorist states.

"For too long, too many Americans have felt powerless in the face of terrorists determined to hurt us," says CSP president Frank Gaffney. "Terror-free investing is something that can unite our country, a way for millions of Americans to have a say in how to enhance our security by telling corporations that partner with terrorist-sponsoring nations that they can do business with our enemies or with us, but not both."

Gaffney says state and municipal employees across the country are unwittingly supporting enemy regimes because many of their pensions are buying shares in firms that invest in ventures based in Iran, Sudan, North Korea and Syria. He hopes that CSP's DivestTerror.org initiative will shine a light on the practice and light a fire under pension-fund managers and policymakers. CSP points to the global effort to shun firms that did business with apartheid South Africa as a model for the initiative.

www.divestterror.org

**The rich get richer**

*Forbes* magazine recently reported that there are now 946 billionaires on earth, the most ever. Their combined wealth grew by 35 percent last year – to $3.5 trillion. Microsoft mogul Bill Gates topped the list for the 13th consecutive year. Although only five Americans rank in the top 20, Americans account for 44 percent of all billionaires.

***And so do the rest of us***

The Associated Press recently reported that the net worth of U.S. households is skyrocketing, climbing to $55.6 trillion at the end of 2006 – a 7.4-percent increase over 2005.

[FEDERAL GOVERNMENT]

AP

**21ST-CENTURY TRAILER TRASH**

*Last March, while FEMA was busy evicting the last Hurricane Katrina victims from federally owned trailers, the agency disclosed that it's been stuck with 8,000 mint-condition trailers that sat vacant for more than 18 months in a field near Hope, Ark. The agency wasn't able to give them away, even to government agencies, as federal law requires. Meanwhile, New Orleans TV stations reported that area hospitals remain severely overcrowded while specially equipped medical trailers, ordered just after Katrina hit and took eight months to arrive, sit unused.*

[ECONOMICS]

## Veteran small-business expo in Vegas

Veteran entrepreneurs who want to know more about government contracting opportunities, marketing, business development and other topics can attend the 3rd Annual National Veteran Small Business Conference and Expo at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, June 25-28.

Conference hot line:
***(703) 693-5985***

***info@nationalveterans conference.com***

[BY THE NUMBERS]

**27** Percentage of Iraqis who believe their country is in a civil war

**64** Percentage of Iraqis who say they want their country to remain united

**2:1** Ratio of Iraqis who prefer the current government to that of Saddam Hussein

**26** Percentage of Iraqis who say a family member has been killed by sectarian violence in the past four years

Opinion Research Business survey, www.opinion.co.uk

THINGS SOLDIERS SAY

**time vampire** Someone who wastes your time through endless chatter and little productivity. The symbol for a time vampire is to slap your watch and hold up your pointer fingers on either side of your mouth like Dracula's fangs.

**Semper I** Pejorative Marine lingo for being overly concerned with one's own personal interests.

**September 10 Americans** Americans who are "ostriches" and don't want to confront the reality and the challenges of the war on terror.

Col. Austin Bay's "Embrace the Suck: A Pocket Guide to Milspeak," is available online. *www.pamphletguys.com*

For more about Bay, who served in Iraq in 2004, visit his Web site. *www.austinbay.net*

ADVERTISEMENT

# TRY VIVAXA™ FREE TODAY!

**And For a Limited Time, receive an additional $200 in Free Gifts!**
***see details below**

Dr. Steffanie Seaver PSY.D is an expert in the area of interpersonal relationships. Researcher, author and accomplished public speaker, she has lectured nationwide for over a decade. Dr. Seaver has also been involved with several publications covering relationship and lifestyle issues.

# Can this "Secret Formula" Really Improve Your Stamina and Performance?

## Ask Steffanie:

***Gentlemen - If YOUR "Timing" issues are keeping you from performing at your best then read this letter that reveals the stamina secret that helps keep your timing more in sync with hers!***

## Dear Steffanie

I know a lot of men read your column and could really benefit from this important STAMINA secret my husband and I recently discovered.

Lately, my husband's stamina seemed to be on a rapid decline. I could tell that he was trying hard to please me and that he'd have liked to believe he was still doing a great job, which is why it was difficult for me to share my feelings with him.

Last month, after what he thought was a "strong effort" for a Saturday afternoon, I couldn't help but be disappointed and I let him know there could be a bit of a gap between his perception of his performance and the reality of our intimate relationship. If our "timing" could only be more in sync.

Of course, he was shocked and disappointed with the news but after really giving it some thought, he realized his stamina could use some improvement.

He was serious about improving our intimacy so he did some research and spoke to a doctor friend of his. His friend told him about a number of cheap desensitizing lubricants on the market that might help his stamina and performance but were known to possibly hurt virility quality and worse, they tend to numb a woman. I just couldn't accept that as an *improvement.*

**"I know he feels great knowing I'm completely satisfied and HE'S the reason why."**

His doctor friend also told him that if he really wanted to improve his "timing and control" and still maintain maximum virility, he should try a new product called **Vivaxa from the makers of Maxoderm (the top selling male enhancement product that's recommended by Leading Physician, Michael A. Savino, M.D., F.A.C.S. for instantly improving virility). The ingredients in this new "stamina secret" make it different from other products because it contains a clinically tested ingredient that is unlike anything else on the planet! Best of all, the formula absorbs super fast, so it doesn't desensitize *my* experience. And it actually HELPS virility quality. Improved virility quality AND "stamina" – it seemed too good to be true!**

My husband got a sample and that weekend we tried it. From the very first application, we noticed such an improvement in his stamina and performance – it was amazing! We're both extremely happy with the results. Needless to say, this has been an incredible month for us. I know he feels great knowing that I'm completely satisfied and he's the reason why. Let's just say we're feel like teenagers again.

So Steffanie, please print this letter – I'm sure there's a ton of women out there wishing their men used Vivaxa, a quality control and performance enhancing product that helps to improve his stamina and performance without negatively affecting her experience! I know they're still offering a **FREE MONTH SUPPLY*** if you call **1-800-860-9419** or visit their website at **www.MaxodermVIVAXA.com**. Tell your readers to hurry because supplies were limited when I called.

Pamela B., Nashville, TN

From the Makers of MAXODERM Male Enhancement Formula

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[LIVING WELL]

# VIRTUAL TRAUMA

*VA researchers use high-tech strategy to help PTSD sufferers.*

PhotoDisc

**BY DR. JOEL KUPERSMITH**

VA researchers are testing and developing effective new therapies for PTSD, and one of the most promising involves virtual reality – computer-generated environments that look, sound, and even feel and smell like the real thing. This technology is used along with a type of cognitive behavioral therapy called "exposure therapy" to help patients recall their traumas in a safe, controlled way and work on gradually changing the negative thoughts, feelings and behaviors linked to those events.

In virtual-reality games, interactivity is key. Users want to control their environment. In the clinic, however, the therapist determines what happens in the environment, based on what the patient is ready to process.

VA researchers were among those who pioneered these treatment methods in the 1990s. "Virtual Vietnam" simulated the sights and sounds of Huey helicopters, mortar blasts and troops calling for help. Clinical trials involving Vietnam veterans found the therapy effective for easing PTSD symptoms.

Today's treatments run on super-fast hardware and feature far more realistic graphics. Experts point out that today's younger veterans, raised on video and computer games, may be more receptive to the therapy than older veterans, who tend to be less at ease with the technology.

Under funding initiatives from VA, the Department of Defense and the National Institutes of Health, VA investigators are leading or helping to conduct virtual-reality trials in Honolulu, Little Rock and Atlanta. Some patients are new veterans, while others are still on active duty. Psychologists agree that treating PTSD as soon as possible may help avoid the progressive complications faced by many Vietnam veterans.

VA's National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Web site **ncptsd.va.gov**

*Joel Kupersmith, M.D., is chief research and development officer for the Veterans Health Administration.*

*This article is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.*

### PTSD under the microscope

- A study led by Dr. Murray Raskind at the Seattle VA found that prazosin, a drug originally used to treat high blood pressure, may be effective in easing the nightmares experienced by many veterans with PTSD.
- A new project at the Waco, Texas, VA will focus on whether genes and brain anatomy play a role in the root causes of PTSD. Researchers will screen and follow 1,400 Fort Hood troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and examine an array of clinical and lifestyle factors.
- Dr. Charles Marmar, director of the PTSD Program at the San Francisco VA, is studying whether the drug D-Cycloserine, which was originally used to treat tuberculosis and has recently shown effectiveness against anxiety, can be used with psychotherapy to make treatment more effective and longer lasting.
- A trial involving 400 veterans at 20 VA medical centers will examine whether risperidone, a relatively new antipsychotic drug, can help veterans with PTSD who have not responded to antidepressants.
- VA researchers in Durham, N.C., are exploring the usefulness of guided imagery for PTSD and studying the therapy's effect on brain hormones.

[VA]

## How many World War I veterans are left?

The Department of Veterans Affairs is seeking help determining how many World War I veterans are alive in the United States. As of mid-April, the number stood at four. To qualify as a World War I veteran, a person must have been on active duty between April 6, 1917, and Nov. 11, 1918. VA is also looking for surviving Americans who served in the armed forces of allied nations. Information can be e-mailed to **ww1@va.gov,** faxed to **(202) 273-6702,** or mailed to the **Office of Public Affairs, VA (80), 810 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20420.**

[MEMBER BENEFITS]

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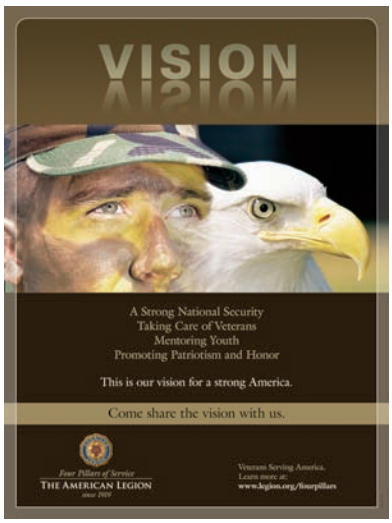


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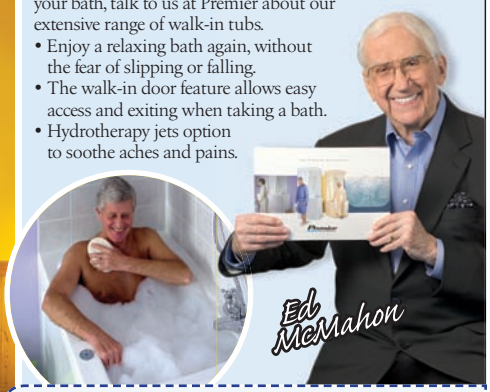


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## How to Submit a Reunion

*The American Legion Magazine* publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,*** **Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org.**

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are published free of charge.

**Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year.** Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

## Other Notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,*** **Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org.**

The magazine will not publish the names of individuals, only the name of the unit from which you seek people. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine,*** **Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine,*** **Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

## AIR FORCE/ARMY AIR FORCES

**1st RSM,** Omaha, NE, 9/6-9, Phil Perry, (717) 545-0974, perryperry101@aol.com; **2nd Bomb Grp,** Houston, 10/11-14, Kemp F. Martin, (713) 467-5435, kmartin1@pdq.net; **6th Bomb Wing (Walker AFB, Roswell, NM),** Roswell, NM, 9/21-22, Bobby Pike, (479) 452-7191, bbpik@aol.com; **11th Armd Cav (Vietnam & Cambodia),** Louisville, KY, 9/6-9, Stephen Page, (843) 280-4506, stephen.r.page@verizon.net; **15th Radio Sqdn Mobile (Japan & Korea),** Charleston, SC, 10/14-17, Bill Moore, (337) 984-2666, onthegoosprey@aol.com; **20th & 81st Tact Ftr Wings (England),** Cleveland, 9/13-16, Dave Hayes, (330) 225-7153, buzzardsinn@webtv.net; **42nd Bomb Wing, 17th, 319th & 320th Bomb Grps (WWII) & 17th/452nd Bomb Wing (Korea),** St. Louis, 8/23-25, Alex Brast, (941) 639-8616, adbrast@earthlink.net; **43rd Bomb Grp 5th AF (WWII),** Philadelphia, 9/3-9, James C. Dieffenderfer, (407) 859-1356, oldbaldy1943@aol.com

**43rd Bomb Grp (H) 63rd, 64th, 65th & 403rd Sqdns,** Philadelphia, 9/3-9, Suzanne Crain, (215) 633-7540, scrain@hagenconstruction.com; **51st Ftr Interceptor Wing,** Middleton, WI, 9/6-8, Dot Faust, (608) 849-8304, grandmadot4@aol.com; **98th Bomb Grp/Wing Vets Assn,** El Paso, TX, 9/19-23, Dennis Posey, (770) 509-7734, dposey@comcast.net; **108th Bomb Sqdn, (Langley Field, Bordeaux AB & Laon AB, France, 1951-1952),** San Antonio, 12/6-9, Bill Byrne, (630) 963-1923, tbbyrnehom@aol.com; **168th Bomb Sqdn (IANG) (Langley Field, Bordeaux AB & Laon AB, France, 1951-1952),** San Antonio, 12/6-9, Budd Revesz, (847) 986-3638, b57jock@aol.com; **180th Bomb Sqdn (L) MO Nat'l Guard (Bordeaux AB & Laon AB, France, 1951-1952),** San Antonio, 12/6-9, E.J. Malone, (847) 437-5782, ejmalone33@comcast.net; **401st Bomb Grp 8th AF (Deenethorpe, England, WWII),** Washington, 10/8-14, George Menzel, (912) 598-0276

**461st Bomb Wing & 4128th Strat Wing,** Branson, MO, 9/27-30, Bill Davies, (501) 225-2400, wjdavies3@comcast.net; **463rd Airlifters Assn,** Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 8/16-19, V.G. Bristol, (269) 646-2462, shaky52601@aol.com; **526th FIS (Ramstein/Landstuhl, Germany),** Rapid City, SD, 9/6-9, Wayne Rebischke, (763) 682-2685, waynerebischke@gmail.com; **600th/601st Photo Sqdns, AAVS & Orlando AFB,** Lake Buena Vista, FL, 9/20-22, Bill Britton, (800) 624-4109; **610th, 618th & 850th AC&W Sqdns, 527th ACW Grp & 43rd Air Div Southern Japan Radar Grp,** Las Vegas, 9/23-26, John Rosso, (661) 832-6036, godfather1501@hotmail.com; **764th Radron,** St. Albans, VT, 8/10-12, Garrie R. Skelton, grsk764@msn.com; 1958th **AACS (Guam, 1949-1951),** Warren Sealey, (605) 842-2615; **6147th Tact Cont Grp "Mosquitos" (Korea),** Kansas City, MO, 8/14-19, Jack Fisher, (610) 926-3588; **6910th Sec Serv (Germany),** Asheville, NC, 10/9-11, Red Barthel, (803) 736-1103, marritt@bellsouth.net; **6927th Radio Sqdn Mobile Sec Serv (1954-1970),** New Orleans, 11/7-11, Jerry Stein, (561) 330-7471, fljerry@bellsouth.net; **7232nd Munitions Maint Grp Det 1000 (Volkel, Netherlands, All Years),** Colorado Springs, CO, 9/6-8, John Humm, (505) 437-3897, bobjoyce37@aol.com; **A-37 Assn,** Fairfax, VA, 9/6-9, Ollie Maier, (512) 353-7432, omaier@txstate.edu; **AF Hosp (Clark AB, Philippines, 1964-1973),** Dallas, 10/25-28, Bonnie Cooper, (210) 520-5580, bonniec@flash.net

**Avn Cadet Class 54-06,** Branson, MO, 6/12-15, Don Meek, (870) 670-4479, donmeek@hotmail.com; **Nuclear Wps Techs Assn,** Dayton, OH, 10/4-6, Anne Golembeski, (505) 323-5037, agolembe@comcast.net; **Orientation Grp,** Fairborn, OH, 8/11, Gene Cusick, (937) 258-2303, g-cusick@sbcglobal.net; **Pilot Tng Class 52-E,** Branson, MO, 10/10-14, Jack Marsh, (918) 422-9978, jandv@ipa.net; **Pilot Tng Class 59-A,** Dayton, OH, 10/9-12, Don Schmenk, (419) 523-4251, dschmenk@bright.net; **Pilot Tng Class 63-D (Laughlin AFB, TX, 1961-1962),** San Antonio, 12/6-8, John Cutney, johncutney@sbcglobal.net; **Sampson AFB Vets Fellowship,** North Conway, NH, 9/17-21, Walt Steesy, (707) 532-4204, samafbvet@aol.com; **Sec Police Assn,** San Antonio, 10/4-6, Jerry Bullock, (512) 396-5444, jerry.bullock@afspaonline.org; **Women in the AF (WAF) Assn,** Albany, NY, 9/3-10, Ethel Smalls, (518) 462-3083;

## ARMY

**1st Eng Cbt Bn,** Minneapolis, 9/9-11, Brian Juneau, (828) 265-9450, nose4news@hotmail.com; **1st FA Obsn Bn (WWII & Korea),** Lawton, OK, 10/4-7, Ralph F. Mueller, (724) 348-5359, ltcrjm@verizon.net; **3rd Armd Div (All Years),** Reno, NV, 7/23-26, Daniel O'Leary, (732) 816-6149, vicepresident@3ad.org; **3rd Bn 506th Inf 101st Abn Div "Currahees,"** Reno, NV, 7/31-8/4, Jim Martin, (805) 550-0437, para101st@aol.com; **5th Armd Div Assn (WWII),** Canton, OH, 8/16-19, Will Cook, (419) 739-9677, wc5ad@bright.net; **7th FA Obsn Bn (WWII),** Fort Mitchell, KY, 9/18-21, Charles Wright, (812) 457-0463, wrightcjr@adelphia.net; **10th Mtn Div (WWII),** Denver, 8/2-5, Don Palmer, (303) 847-6747, dhpalmer@aol.com; **14th Cbt Eng Bn,** Branson, MO, 9/13-16, Roger Heaton, (520) 404-8183, rogerheaton1042@hotmail.com; **16th Armd Div,** San Diego, 9/12-16, Edward Krusheski, (609) 978-0490, ed16armor@aol.com; **24th Inf Rgt Cbt Team,** Baton Rouge, LA, 7/19-22, Mrs. Wilfred Matthews, (337) 477-4508, wm24thinrfct@aol.com; **25th Inf Div,** Lexington, KY, 8/28-9/1, Glenda Ellis, (215) 248-2572, tropicltn@aol.com; **28th Gen Hosp Assn (Croix Chapeau),** Branson, MO, 10/10-13, Joe Lott, (803) 838-3725, wayx@seark.net; **47th Eng Camouflage Bn (Fort Riley, KS, Nov 1950-Nov 1952),** Grand Island, NE, 9/18-20, Ted George, (308) 382-6278; **68th AAA Gun Bn & 508th Opns,** Branson, MO, 10/4-7, Bobby Burks, (573) 636-2030, bobbyburks@aol.com

**86th "Blackhawk" Inf Div (1942-1946),** Indianapolis, 9/5-9, Jerome Deitz, (805) 528-7136, jerryelsie@aol.com; **90th Div Assn,** Pittsburgh, 8/9-12, James R. Reid, (630) 789-0204, reids90thdivisionassoc@comcast.net; **91st AAA Bn,** Branson, MO, 9/10-11, B. Staser, (618) 676-1160, bstaser@wabash.net; **94th AAA AW Bn (SP),** Bellingham, WA, 8/4-5, Glenn R. Hawley, (360) 733-0433, honeybrownhhr@comcast.net; **96th AAA APO 949 (Anchorage, AK),** Branson, MO, 11/9-11, Franklin Ellyson, timesend09@aol.com; **104th "Timberwolf" Inf Div,** San Antonio, 8/28-9/3, Art Leu, (479) 855-7120, artmurleu@sbcglobal.net; **106th Inf Div "Golden Lions,"** Kansas City, MO, 9/5-9, Marion Ray, (618) 377-3674; **109th Eng Bn (C) 34th Div (WWII),** Rapid City, SD, 9/14-16, Clarence C. Carsner, (605) 343-2708; **112th Inf Rgt 28th Inf Div,** Erie, PA, 9/11-14, Richard Brinker, (814) 825-3553, rsbrinker@aol.com

**114th Rgt 44th Div,** Brandon, SD, 9/6-8, Curtis Eggers, (605) 332-0718, eggers925@yahoo.com; **198th AAA AW Bn (WWII),** Chattanooga, TN, 9/6-8, Otis Cornett, (423) 888-1319; **223rd Inf Rgt 40th Inf Div (Korea),** Harrisburg, PA, 9/19-22, Joe Alvarez, (210) 490-3202, jalvarez0921@sbcglobal.net; **238th Eng Cbt Bn,** Charleston, SC, 7/19-22, James Druck, (717) 755-4345, jim-druck@verizon.net; **249th Eng Bn Assn (All Eras),** Louisville, KY, 9/13-15, Irmin C. Magruder, (540) 886-6941, eng249@verizon.net; **260th Grp, 260th, 340th & 380th AA, CA, AAA (WWII & Korea),** Silver Springs, MD, 10/20, E. Wayne Brizendine,

(301) 770-7876, ewbriz@aol.com; **361st Inf (WWII),** Houston, 9/6-8, C.A. Bowling, (270) 683-3409, cab361@adelphia.net; **413th/523rd Army Ord,** Ashville, NC, 9/7-9, Ralph Pickering, (419) 629-3997; **428th MP Escort Guard Co,** Atlanta, 9/28-30, John W. Burson, (770) 786-2219; **434th AA, 435th AA, 532nd AA, 900th AA, 473rd Inf Rgt,** Dearborn, MI, 8/31-9/2, Leroy D. Good, (765) 659-1256; **504th MP Bn,** Las Vegas, 8/16-18, John Buckley, (703) 862-3573, mikepapa504@yahoo.com; **550th AA (WWII),** Westfield, NY, 9/14-15, Vince Calarco, (716) 326-2320; **558th FA Bn Patton's 3rd Army,** Reno, NV, 9/9-11, Bob Haas, (360) 491-6898, merciebob@msn.com; **568th Ord HM (Korea),** Chattanooga, TN, 9/27-29, D. L. Flynn, (314) 481-1046, rofarrell@mw.net; **603rd Med Tank Co,** Rice Lake, WI, 8/16-18.Robert Lancaster, (715) 736-1919, lancer@chibardun.net; **605th Tank Dest Bn,** Findlay, OH, 9/1-3, Lawrence Montgomery, (269) 685-8729

**658th Amph Tract Bn (WWII),** Elk Grove, IL, 8/14-17, Elmer Hallen, (262) 626-2253, generalelmer658@yahoo.com; **709th MP Bn (Germany, All Eras),** Covington, KY, 10/11-14, Curt Cree, (715) 458-4571, cc709thmp@hotmail.com; **818th Tank Dest Bn,** Lincoln, NE, 7/25-28, Joan Pearson, (402) 643-4252, joan@hughesbros.com; **820th Eng Avn Bn (1952-1954),** Marion, IL, 10/5-6, Jarret Rotramel, (618) 932-6486; **836th Eng Avn Bn,** Crete, NE, 9/14-16, Clarence Prachell, (402) 826-5308; **841st Eng Avn Bn (WWII & Korea),** Surfside Beach, SC, 10/10-14, Ed McManus, (202) 557-9407, colsapper@aol.com; **936th FA Bn,** Fayettesville, AR, 8/18-19, Wayne Bohannan, (918) 437-5324; **1092nd Eng Bn Assn,** Parkersburg, WV, 8/17-19, Richard Wilson, (304) 464-4543, rrw73139@hotmail.com; **AZ ASA,** Tucson, AZ, 9/14-16, Mel Corning, (602) 995-4018, mcorning@cox.net

**B Co 9th AIB 6th Armd Div,** Reading, PA, 7/26-29, Lester Hartman, (610) 375-4984; **B Co 27th Eng Bn,** New Ulm, MN, 9/9-11, Jerry Peichel, (507) 426-7564; **Boscomantico Army Air Field (All Units),** Branson, MO, 10/12-14, Fred Redlinger, (414) 588-3707, fredred.1@juno.com; **F Co 279th Inf 45th Div,** Corydon, IN, 10/11-13, Ernest Heishman, (812) 738-3270; **Kagnew Stn ASA (1955-1965),** Niagara Falls, Ontario, 9/12-15, Joe Cravotta, (716) 633-0555, jcmicro@adelphia.net; **Post Offices APO 3, 7, 9, 45, 354, 500 & 503 (Japan & Korea, 1955-1958),** Branson, MO, 9/27-10/1, Ben Jones, (334) 283-4965, benjones114@eezznet.com; **Yankee Inf Div Vets Assn,** Groton, CT, 6/12-14, Robert R. Raney, (978) 531-2257

## COAST GUARD

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## JOINT

**Assn of Avn Ordnancemen,** Reno, NV, 7/8-15, Dennis Costa, aaosecretary@aaoweb.org; **Berlin Airlift Vets Assn,** Norfolk, VA, 9/28-10/2, L.D. Whipple, (318) 965-9860, ldalewhip@aol.com; **Civ Conservation Corps,** Cumberland Falls, KY, 9/27-30, Tony Sanchez, (505) 710-4888; **NE Vietnam Vets Reunion Assn,** Freehold, NY, 7/26-30, John Kellegher, (518) 634-7748, jjk2897@aol.com; ***Finch* DE/DER 328/WDE 428,** Rochester, NY, 9/18-22, James Wachob, wachob@lynnet.com; **Moroccan Reunion Assn,** Colorado Springs, CO, 9/26-30, Robert Sieborg, (402) 496-1498; **Navy-Mar Corps Ret Judge Advocates' Assn,** San Diego, 10/5-7, Rufus Young, (760) 804-3927, rufusyoung@msn.com; **PBY Catalina Int'l Assn (All Hands),** Omaha, NE, 9/26-30, Don Mortimer, (631) 298-2685, pbydon@optonline.net

## MARINES

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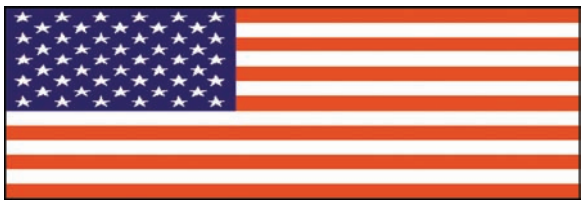
**John J. Mulkern, Dept. of Massachusetts.** Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1980-1984, D ept. Cmdr. 1985-1986, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1986-1987, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1986-1987, Nat'l Econ. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1987-1988, Nat'l Resolutions Sub-Cmte. Memb. 1987-1992, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1987-1993, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1987-1994, 1999-2000 & 2001-2007, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1988-1992, Nat'l Legis. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1990-1993, Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 1993-1994 and Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Memb. 1994-2007.

**W. Dudley Robbins, Dept. of North Carolina.** Nat'l Rehab. Cmsn. Advisory Board Memb. 1951-1952 & 1955-1956, Nat'l Sec. Tng. Cmte. Memb. 1952-1953 & 1956-1957, Dept. Cmdr. 1957-1958, Nat'l Grp. Insurance Cmte. Memb. 1958-1964, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Memb. 1958-1960, 1961-1962, 1963-1964 & 1965-1984, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1960-1962, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1962-1966, Nat'l Sec. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1962-1965, Nat'l Americanism Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1965-1966, Nat'l Housing Cmte. Nat'l Cmdrs. Rep. 1967-1968, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1972-1975, Nat'l Americanism Consultant 1975, Nat'l Law & Order Cmte. Chmn. 1975-1997, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Chmn. 1987-1988 and Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1987-1990 and 1993-1994.

**John Schurrer, Dept. of Wisconsin.** Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1966-1967, Nat'l Homeland Sec. & Civil Preparedness Cmte. Memb. 1970-1991, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1975-1990, 1993-1994 & 1999-2000, Dept. Cmdr. 1976-1977, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1978-1980, Nat'l Homeland Sec. & Civil Preparedness Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1983-1984 and Nat'l & Homeland Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1993-2004.

**Edgar D. Smith, Dept. of New York.** Nat'l Counter Subversive Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1987-1999 and Nat'l Econ. Cmsn. Memb. 1999-2004.

**James F. Yardley, Dept. of Utah.** Nat'l Mbrshp & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1957-1959, Dept. Cmdr. 1963-1964 and Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1977-1986.

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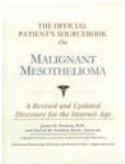


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He advised the congregation to do what he and his family had done: put the TV away in the closet.

"That's right," his wife mumbled, "and it gets awfully crowded in there."

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**NEAR THE END** of a particularly trying round of golf, during which the golfer had hit numerous fat shots, he said in frustration to his caddy, "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."

"Try heaven," the caddy replied. "You've already moved most of the earth."

**A PACK OF WOLVES** chased two rabbits into a thicket. After a few minutes, one rabbit turned to the other and asked, "Well, do you want to make a run for it or stay here a few days and outnumber them?"

**"I USED TO GO** fishing until it struck me: you can buy fish. What am I doing in a boat at 4:30 in the morning? If I want a hamburger, I don't track cattle down." – *Kenny Potchenson*

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**A WOMAN** was driving her 8-year-old daughter to her grandparents' home for an overnight stay. It was late, there was very little traffic, and they were enjoying a peaceful ride. It was a far cry from the usual chaos surrounding them when the woman drove her daughter to various activities during rush hour. After a lengthy silence, her daughter said, "Mom, I have a question. When you're driving, are *you* ever the idiot?"

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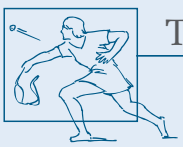

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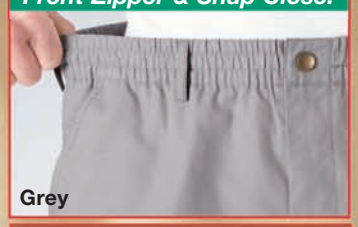


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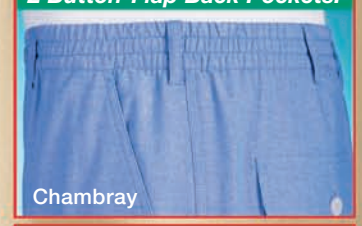


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